

GERALD FITZGERALD

An Irish Tale.

BY ANN OF SWANSEA,

AUTHOR OF

UNCLE PÉREGRINE'S HEIRESS; CONVICTION; GONZALO DE BALDIVIA;
DEEDS OF THE OLDEN TIME; SECRETS IN EVERY MANSION;
WOMAN'S A RIDDLE; GUILTY OR NOT GUILTY, &c. &c.

"The man who harbours enmity in his bosom, cherishes a serpent to sting himself."

IN FIVE VOLUMES.

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GERALD FITZGERALD.

CHAP. I.

"Where can the wretched hope to find repose,
But in the grave?"

.....

Begone! interrupt not my fix'd purpose,
I am resolv'd to rid me of my plagues;
Away, and let me die.

————— I pray thee, cease thy counsel,
Which falls into my ears as profitless
As water in a sieve; give me not counsel;
————— for men
Can counsel, and speak comfort to that grief
Which they themselves not feel; but tasting it,
Their counsel turns to passion, which before
Would give perceptual medicine to rage,
Fetter strong madness with a silken thread;
Charm ach with air, and agony with words;
No, no; 'tis all men's office to speak patience
To those that wring under the load of sorrow,
But no man's virtue, nor sufficiency,
To be so moral, when he shall endure
The like himself.

SHAKESPEARE.

OF all calamities "that flesh is heir to,"
none are more agonizing to human feel-

of Ulster; to which was annexed a few acres of ground, chiefly covered with mountains, bleak and sterile, producing neither tree nor herb, for the solace or use of man, but containing in their unexplored depths, rich veins of marble, which the indolence as well as the poverty of their late possessor had suffered to remain buried; though had the quarries been worked, the treasure they contained would have propped the fallen towers of the castle, and restored the splendour of the ancient house of Fitzgerald. To this castle, little as its dilapidated state and lonely situation promised of comfort, Phelim was sent to prepare for the reception of his master, who, disgusted with the world, with feelings wounded, and a brain irritated almost to madness, determined to retire to its loneliness, and shun all future intercourse with mankind.

The wife of Mr. Fitzgerald was an heiress of immense wealth, brought up in the Catholic persuasion, according to the will of her parents, who died when she was an infant. Her passion for the heretic Fitzgerald was regarded with horror

by her relations and spiritual director; but being of age, and mistress of her fortune and estate, she married to please her own inclinations, settling the one-half of her possessions on her Protestant husband.

Fitzgerald was not in love with lady Amanda Pembroke, neither did he wish to marry at the early age of twenty-one; but she pursued him every where; she fell sick for love of him, and gratitude for such true affection, together with the advice of his friends, urged him to save her life, and accept the means of supporting the dignity of his name.

Lady Amanda Fitzgerald did not like Ireland; she had a magnificent seat, delightfully situated in the fertile vale of Evesham; and in compliance with her wishes, Fitzgerald relinquished his intention of repairing his castle, abandoned his native Ulster, and made England his constant place of residence — But though by his marriage Fitzgerald had gained abundance of wealth; he was not long in discovering that he had failed to secure happiness; lady Amanda's disposition was in every respect opposite to his own; he was

open-hearted, generous, and affable—she was cold and haughty to her dependants, capricious in her temper, and ostentatious in her charities: before marriage, her ladyship professed her belief that the prayer of a Protestant would prevail in heaven as readily as that of a Catholic. Shortly after their union, she was seized with a desire to convert her husband to her own faith; but not finding her arguments produce the effect she expected, the ardency of her love began to cool, and it is possible that her confessor, who saw, with an envious eye, her immense fortune enriching a heretic, might have effected a separation from the man whom she had so lately persuaded herself she loved to distraction, had she not, in the second year of her marriage, discovered herself to be in a way that promised an heir to her wealth:

It was at this period that a terrible and mysterious circumstance fixed on the young and high-minded Fitzgerald the suspicion of a crime, that placed his person in confinement, and his life in imminent peril; and it was now that his wife, persuaded by her confessor that a heretic was

capable of committing the most atrocious act, unfeelingly expressed her belief of his guilt, and deserted him in the height of his misfortunes; the heart-wounded, injured Fitzgerald, solemnly swore their separation should be eternal; and being resolved to owe nothing to her, who had shewn to him neither the affection nor duty of a wife, he made over the wealth she had bestowed on him to their unborn child, whether male or female, with a clause that it should again revert to her, in case of the child's death. Having arranged his affairs in the best way his distressed state of mind would admit, and sealed up, to be returned to the donor, all the valuable trinkets lady Amanda had lavished on him in her days of love, he set off for Ireland, hoping that he should never again be necessitated to hold communion with a woman so fickle in disposition, so hard of heart.

Phelim had with some difficulty prevailed on an old woman and her grandson to undertake the domestic concerns of the castle, and had sent many necessary articles of furniture from Armagh, the nearest

town, which he knew were indispensable to the comfort of his master; but after all his arrangements, the only two apartments it was possible to make habitable, were heavy and gloomy, and resisted his best efforts to give them an air of cheerfulness; and he assented with a sigh to old Cauthleen's opinion, that sure now and it was a great big ramshackled place, just fit only for owls and bats to build their nests in, after all her sweeping and cleaning; and she could not help thinking that a man must be crack-brained to come to such a dismal lonesome place, who had the means to live any where else. But to this melancholy castle, defaced, broken down, and in some parts open "*to the pitiless storm,*" Fitzgerald came; and on him the dreary aspect of the barren mountains without, nor the scantily-furnished apartments, made merely habitable for his reception within the castle, made no impression; for the fatigue of travelling, without stopping to take necessary rest and food, joined with the anguish of his mind, festering with accumulated injuries, had brought on a fever, and he remained some time

confined to his bed, watched with unremitting care by the faithful and deeply-afflicted Phelim, whom on his recovery he upbraided for not suffering him to die. From this time, his temper, once cheerful and even, became morose and stern; the gloom that clouded his naturally-open brow, seemed to contract it into deep furrows; he appeared to be lost to himself and the world, for he would pass whole days, and sometimes nights, regardless of health and repose, in wandering about the mountains, or lying on their barren summits; and when the snow or heavy rains constrained him to forego these rambles, and confined him to the castle, he would sit for hours motionless and silent, his arms folded on his breast, his eyes bent on the earth, brooding over his afflictions, meditating on death, and endeavouring to persuade himself that when his heart ceased to beat, there would be an end of all; and that futurity was the wily invention of priests, by which they exercised dominion over the ignorant, the weak, and the credulous.

In this distressful way, two months of a severe winter had passed, and Phelim, in addition to attending on his master, had been obliged to coax and bribe Cauthleen to continue at the castle, who protested she preferred the scanty meals of butter-milk and paratees she ate in her own snug nate bit of a cabin, where the pig, and the childer, and Cuff, the one-eared cur, took their dinners, share and share alike, out of the same wooden dish, to all the roast and the boiled that was set before her, for bekays she was quite sure and certain the place was haunted, such noises as she heard of nights in the passages, and such clattering of the windows, and shaking of the doors.

“Why, sure now, Cauthleen, you are not frightened at the wind?” said Phelim.

“The wind!” repeated Cauthleen—
“what, have I lived all these years, and not know ghosts from wind? Och, now, master Phelim, none of your comical jokes; though I never crossed the Liffey, I know more about such things than you may suspect; and as sure as I am alive now to tell it, I heard the banshee last

night, and I am certain somebody will die, and that soon."

Phelim did not entirely disregard the superstitions of his country; the mention of the banshee sent a shuddering terror through his nerves, for he remembered to have heard his master tell a circumstance, that proved the death of the chief persons of his family had always been supernaturally announced: but before Cauthleen's account of the banshee had entirely gained credence with Phelim, and frightened him into the belief that she came to warn them of Mr. Fitzgerald's death, he recollected that a heavy visitation had just passed away, that the fever had left him, and spring was approaching; and he trusted when the sun shone bright and warm, when the sky was blue, and the shrubs and trees in the garden, which the united labour of himself and Alec had cleared from weeds and stones, put forth their leaves and flowers, his master's health would be restored, his spirits regain their former tone, and he would perhaps be induced to quit the castle, which, though it had once been a very grand structure, was

now an absolute ruin, and with its crumbling walls, that shook with every gust of wind, was sufficient to engender melancholy thoughts, in the gayest and most unthinking mind; for it was impossible to behold unmoved the devastations made by war and time, which had tumbled from their lofty summits, towers of gigantic strength, defaced the grandeur of sumptuous halls, and rendered cold the hearths, that in the olden time had diffused warmth, and added to the convivial spirit of kinsmen, friends, and vassals.

“ ——— Between the moss-clad stones,
The nettle and the dock rear their rank heads,
And as the wind sweeps over them, they seem
To bend in sorrow o’er the spot once graced
By valour and by beauty; deserted
Now, silent and ruinous.”

But while the faithfully-attached Phelim looked anxiously forward to the renovating warmth of spring, and hoped that his unhappy master, who had not yet reached the prime of manhood, would struggle with misfortune, and again mix with, and hold intercourse with the world he had flown from, the miserable Fitzgerald felt his disgust to society and hatred of life

increase every hour; and his thoughts were constantly employed on the dreadful subject of suicide, in proving to himself the propriety and necessity of putting an end to his existence, which had become a burden of intolerable weight.

Events, of a nature, terrible to a young, noble, and ardent spirit, had effected a complete change in the character and feelings of Fitzgerald, who had numbered little more than twenty-three summers; the frankness, gaiety, and kindness of his nature, was frozen up, his heart seemed crushed and withered; he had become gloomy and almost an Atheist; for he had nearly confirmed himself in the belief, that after death followed annihilation; that the body and spirit, or that undefinable something called spirit, that actuated the will, and propelled the actions of the body, would dissolve, and mix again with the elements, which it was evident to him had each contributed a part in the formation of man. "And of what use am I in the world," said Fitzgerald, mentally pursuing the subject; "shunned, stigmatized, and abhorred, I shall leave no one to lament

my fate, except my faithful Phelim, and to him I will bequeath all that I possess, which, little as it is, will be sufficient to make him independant of that world, to which he would persuade me to return; but, no, no, "I must live with honour, or not live at all; and since my name is blurred—that name, which descended to me untarnished from a long line of ancestors, it is better it should become at once extinct, than survive, a mark *for scorn to point the slow unmoving finger at.*"

Satisfied that the son of his prosperity had sunk for ever, that the lustre of his good name, the dearest of his possessions, would never be restored, he busied himself in drawing up a will, by which he made Phelim heir to all his possessions, he being the only person who had not forsaken him in his misfortunes, and believing him guiltless of crime, had voluntarily followed him into solitude, without motive of interest, or expectation of reward.

It was the evening of a stormy day, when the tempest having spent its fury, the blustering wind sank into a sullen calm, and the moon struggling through

a mass of retreating clouds, shed a pale cold light on his accustomed walks, that Fitzgerald stood on the mutilated bridge, that formed an insecure passage across a mountain stream, now swollen and rendered turbid by the tempest, that all day had raved, and rushed in howling gusts across its bosom ; casting a wild glance upon the agitated water, Fitzgerald sighed heavily —“ Yesterday,” said he, “ I gazed upon this stream, the sun glittered upon its surface, and the clear blue water stole tranquilly along ; now its course is rapid and troubled, its foaming spray dashes high upon the rocky banks, as if impatient of their narrow bounds : this,” continued Fitzgerald, “ is emblematic of my life ; bright, sunny, and tranquil, were my days, till the whirlwind came, and tore up, and made a wreck of happiness ; and now I rage, and foam, and struggle, to escape its devastation. But is this all ? no, no, there is yet more, and of deeper import—the hoarse murmur of the stream speaks with audible voice, my heart understands its language, for it promises oblivion of misery ; it says—“ Devoted wretch ! here you

may find repose, a refuge from every ill; hesitate no longer, plunge in at once, and be at rest!"

Frenzied by calamity, Fitzgerald sprang to the top of the bridge, and was about to leap into the stream, when a strong arm suddenly arrested his impious purpose, and, in spite of his struggles, dragged him forcibly from the spot, where, but for this providential interference, he had committed the dreadful act of self-destruction.

"Begone! interrupt not my purpose—let me die!" raved Fitzgerald, endeavouring to shake off the stranger, who, with powerful and determined strength, drew him towards the castle.

"I have come a long and weary journey, to converse with you," said the stranger; "what I have to impart is of importance—give me a patient hearing, and if my communication fails to alter your present intention, you will be at liberty, after my departure, to commit the damning crime of self-murder."

Weak from abstinence and want of sleep, Fitzgerald was unable to free himself from the nervous grasp of the athletic

stranger; and had not Phelim, who was going, as was his custom, in search of his master, accidentally met them, exhausted with ineffectual struggles, he would have sunk to the earth; with the assistance of his faithful attendant, the unhappy man was borne to the castle, and placed on a couch in his apartment, where he remained for some time so still, that the stranger believed he had fallen asleep; but suddenly starting up, he placed his hand upon his forehead, as if trying to recal his scattered recollections. A lamp, Phelim had placed before his couch, threw its light on the countenance of the stranger, and with a shudder of agony, Fitzgerald remembered he had seen it once before, and in a place, the horrors of which he would have given worlds, had he possessed them, to obliterate from his memory.

“Agent of evil! to what act of cowardice, baseness, and dishonour, are you now come to tempt me?” asked Fitzgerald, surveying the stranger with an eye of mingled sternness and contempt.

“You will pardon me, Mr. Fitzgerald, if I deny the charge of having persuaded

you to any act of baseness or dishonour. It is true," continued the stranger, "I advised you to fly from the peril that menaced your life, and offered to supply you with money, and facilitate your escape, because, believing you guiltless of the crime laid to your charge, I thought, when at liberty, it was possible you might exonerate yourself from all suspicion, by discovering the perpetrator of the crime; besides, had my intentions towards you been, as you suspect, evil, why did I prevent your committing the rash act, that would have consigned you to everlasting perdition?"

"Whatever were in reality your motives on a late occasion," replied Fitzgerald, "they appeared to me a villainous contrivance, a base plot to stamp me with indelible infamy, and I refused your offers, with the scorn I believed they merited. For your present interference I feel no gratitude; I cannot—do not thank you for preserving a life that is hateful to me. The men in whom I confided, who shared my purse, who partook the hospitalities of my table, whom I considered my true

friends, forsook me in the day of trouble; and when the laws of my country pronounced my acquittal, as if they feared contagion from imputed crime, they kept aloof, and proved to me, that having been suspected ~~was~~ sufficient guilt; and that being publicly acquitted had in no way freed me from private accusation, or restored me to that place in society, from which I had been hurled. Stigmatized and disgraced, despoiled of domestic peace, what can life present to me to compensate the evils I have already endured, and the expectation of those that remain hid in the dark clouds of futurity?"

"It offers you," replied the stranger, "the bright hope of seeing your fame restored, and fortune again pouring her rich stores upon you."

"Name not fortune to me," interrupted Fitzgerald, sternly; "it was aspiring after wealth, ambition to possess the gauds of fortune, that has made me the wretch I am—it was wealth that seduced me to bind myself to a heartless, unfeeling woman—that bond is broken."

“ Lady Amanda Fitzgerald is dead,” said the stranger.

“ Dead !” repeated Fitzgerald—“ dead did you say ?—how ?—when did she die ?”

“ She died some weeks ago, and suddenly, as I have heard,” replied the stranger.

“ She died persuaded of my guilt,” resumed Fitzgerald ; “ but if there is another world, the veil is now removed, and she beholds me as I am, ‘ *a man more sinned against than sinning.*’ But her child ! answer me—is that dead also ? Poor babe ! I trust it has escaped the misery of being taught to hate its father.”

“ To this,” replied the stranger, “ I can give no answer ; for it was by chance I heard the obsequies of lady Amanda Fitzgerald had been performed at Evesham, to which place her corpse had been removed from Bengworth Hall, that it might repose in the family vault beside her parents.”

“ And is it so, cold in thy grave, deceived, mistaken woman ! Could not thy youth, thy beauty, and thy wealth, save thee from death ? But my resentment

shall not pursue thee after death. Thou canst outrage me no more," said Fitzgerald: "would we had never met! but I forgive thee. This event is indeed unexpected.—But I forget to demand why you have followed me to my mountain hold?" continued he, addressing the stranger. "I thought I was safe here from persecution. What brought you hither?"

"I sought you out, commissioned by one who is your friend."

"My friend!" exclaimed Fitzgerald, impatiently—"I have no friend; no, no, do not pollute your lips with uttering such a falsehood—I have no friend: the smiling, flattering crew I thought my friends, forsook me when I needed their support; not one stood by me in my hour of peril. Come you to mock me?"

"No, as I am a man," replied the stranger. "I pray you hear me with patience. You have a friend, Mr. Fitzgerald, one who sincerely grieves for your misfortunes, and is desirous to alleviate—"

"Who is he?" demanded Fitzgerald—"by what name am I to recognise this friend?"

“ His name must remain unknown,” replied the stranger—“ I have sworn not to disclose it.”

“ Begone—leave me on the instant!” returned Fitzgerald, the indignant blood flushing his pale face with crimson; “ thou art a mean spy, deputed by my enemies to discover how the degraded Fitzgerald bears his altered fortunes, to report the ruinous state of this once regal castle, and glut their malice with the recital of my poverty and wretchedness.”

“ On my soul you do me wrong, and injure the intentions of him that sent me. Behold!” continued the stranger, drawing from his bosom two purses filled with gold, “ your unknown friend sends you these.”

“ And what deed of villany does he expect me to perform,” asked Fitzgerald, “ that he offers a bribe of such magnitude? These purses,” weighing them in his hands, “ are heavy. Speak, man, whose throat am I to cut?—whose mansion set on fire?—whose honest character am I to swear away? for having been accused, fettered, and confined as a felon, no doubt your em-

ployer thinks me fit and ready to act a felon's part."

"I beseech you, sir, be calm," said the stranger; "I meant not to excite this passion; believe me I am the bearer of no proposal, but what one honourable man might offer to another."

"Well, well, I am calm," replied Fitzgerald—"speak on—I will listen to you, and, if I can, with patience; but I have suffered much, and injury has made me irritable."

"These, I am commissioned to say," pointing to the purses, "will enable you to seek a foreign land, where, under another name, you may live and forget."

"Forget!" exclaimed Fitzgerald; "am I a stock—a stone—a dolt—an idiot, that I should forget my injuries? Never! never!"

"Many are the innocent persons, in the past and present day, who have suffered wrong and injury," replied the stranger; "but remembering that all the children of Adam, in this their earthly pilgrimage, are doomed to tribulation, they have borne their burden with fortitude and meekness,

looking to Him, who, in his wisdom, doth afflict, to heal and recompense."

"Happy are they," returned Fitzgerald, "whose temperate blood enables them to bear with equanimity, outrage and scorn: for me, I have a burning in my brain, a loathing at my heart, a complication of terrible feelings, each in itself sufficient to urge me on to death."

"Banish the thought," resumed the stranger; "believe not yourself more wretched than thousands of your fellow-men; if you could hear the groans extorted by oppression——"

"I should not feel my own pangs less acutely," interrupted Fitzgerald; "nor am I grown so savage-hearted, as to derive consolation, and soothe my own misery with the reflection that others are more wretched than myself. But this is waste of words.—Tell your employer I need not his assistance, or advice."

"Do not rashly refuse the gift that would enable you to seek a distant country," said the stranger, "where, with new friends, and occupied in new pursuits, you may regain content. Your unknown

friend engages to remit you yearly five hundred pounds, on condition that you consent to receive it, without attempting to discover the name of the donor."

"As yet," replied Fitzgerald, proudly, "the patrimony of my ancestors places me above the humiliation of accepting assistance from the charity of strangers. Return to your employer—tell him the pride of Fitzgerald still remains unsubdued—that he must drink yet deeper of affliction, before he become so abject as to subsist upon alms. Take hence this pernicious trash," continued he, spurning the purses from him, with scornful action; "inform your employer, that from my inmost soul I despise him and his bounty: had he boldly stood by me in my hour of trial, had he, in defiance of public opinion, declared himself assured of my innocence, and openly avowed himself my friend, I would have placed him next my heart—I would have been guided by his counsels, and forced my proud spirit to share his purse; but since the man who sends me gold, fears that the world should link his

name with mine, or know he holds correspondence with the degraded Fitzgerald, take back his insulting gift; tell him I would suffer the extreme of want, die inch by inch of famine, rather than add to my debasement, by incurring obligation at which my pride revolts."

The countenance of the stranger evinced disappointment and anxiety; and though the gold had been sternly and indignantly refused, yet did he continue to urge its acceptance by saying, "I am truly sorry you misconstrue a generous intention, and call a friendly offer insult; yet I beseech you, take time; consider you are yet very young, and——"

"Young!" interrupted Fitzgerald, "you are mistaken; look here," pointing to his hair; "age has sprinkled its snows upon my head; I am old," continued he, with a deep-fetched sigh, "old in affliction."

"Time," resumed the stranger, "time may restore you to the enjoyment of youth, to fame and happiness."

"It cannot be," replied Fitzgerald—"you speak of things impossible. Have

I not been suspected of a heinous crime, arraigned, and narrowly escaped an ignominious death? what can time do for a wretch like me? Look on my wasted frame, my sunk and hollow eyes; you cannot see my heart oppressed and crushed with sorrow, you cannot number its agonizing throbs, or know how much it longs for the calm still sleep of death."

"But as a man," returned the stranger, "subject to mischances, trials, and adversities, I can feel for, and compassionate, your sorrows; and as a Christian, I am bound to enjoin you to be patient, and moderate the vehemence of your grief—bear up with fortitude against misfortune; put your trust in Him with whom all things are possible, who bruises and can heal. Hope not that self-destruction will bring the peace you sigh for—assure yourself there is a life beyond the grave—trust not to the deluding sophistry of infidels—but believe that to rush unbidden into the presence of your Immortal Judge, will be to ensure eternal condemnation."

Fitzgerald waved his hand, to impose

silence, and expressed a wish for the departure of the stranger.

“For this night I must trespass on the hospitality and shelter of your roof,” said he; “the road to the village, where I left my foundered horse, is dangerous at night, to one unacquainted with its windings and its roughness.”

Fitzgerald laid his hand upon a table-bell, with the intention to summon Phe-lim, when the stranger again urged him to take the hours of night for reflection, before he finally rejected the gold and the proposals of which he had been the bearer.

“There needs no reflection,” said Fitzgerald, “for my decision is already made; take back the tempting devil to him that sent you—tell him I spurn his gold as I would him who meanly shuns acquaintance with an injured man. To you, whose counsel would persuade me patiently to drag along my chain of misery, till disease or age dismiss me from hated life, I answer, it is easy for those who have never known adversity to preach resignation. I wish not, much as I detest mankind, that you should have such trials to sustain as have

befallen me. Now begone, counsel me no more; my griefs and injuries are beyond hope or consolation." He then hastily rang for Phelim, and bade him supply the stranger with refreshment and a bed.

To the respectful "Good night," uttered by the stranger as he left the room, Fitzgerald replied—"Farewell; trouble me no more."

After the door had closed, and he was left to his own thoughts, his mind reverted to the death of his wife, whose unfeeling conduct had extinguished every spark of affection in his heart. He did not lament her early fate, for she was lost to him before; her own act had dissolved all ties between them; and it mattered not to him, whether the grave or extended miles divided them; but his child—the unoffending babe—was that dead also? he hoped it was; for he wished not to perpetuate a dishonoured name.

The baroness Wandesford, of Lisburn Abbey, in case lady Amanda Fitzgerald died without issue, would, with the countess Vandeleur, be the inheritors of her estates; was it not likely that one of these,

particularly the former, who was a widow, and a Protestant, might design to give him back a portion of the wealth he had resigned? It was possible; she might believe him innocent, yet fear to embroil herself with her relations, the greater part of them Catholics, by shewing him open countenance. But were he certain that lady Wandesford was his unknown friend, no necessity would ever induce him to accept any portion of the wealth that had belonged to her who had treated him so unworthily.

Wearied with conjecture, Fitzgerald threw himself on his couch, and tossed from side to side in mental agony, which when his heavy eyelids closed, was increased by the horrible vision that presented itself to his distempered fancy. He dreamed he stood on the precipitous edge of a dark yawning abyss, the steep sides of which, as far as his eye could penetrate, were formed of sharp-pointed stones. Horrible as this gulf appeared, Fitzgerald thought he prepared to cast himself down, but before he could spring from the earth, he felt an invisible hand clutch his hair,

and suspend him over the interminable depth, while a voice awful and impressive said—"Poor ignorant mortal! be not deluded into the belief, that by leaping into this abyss, thou wilt end thy miseries; it has no bottom; and thy body, torn and lacerated on those sharp stones, will bound from one point to the next, to all eternity—this is the repose of the suicide." At that moment, Fitzgerald thought a blaze of light illumined the sides of the gulf, and he beheld monstrous serpents uncoil their scaly lengths, and distend their pestiferous jaws, from which issued terrific hissings.—"Hark!" resumed the voice, "such are the greetings that welcome the self-murderer to the abodes of never-ending woe. Pursue thy will—go howl in the regions of perdition, where there is neither repentance nor pardon." The hand then withdrew its hold, and Fitzgerald dreamed that in horror inexpressible he fell into the gulf.

Under the strong influence of this vision, he shrieked, and awoke shuddering, his limbs bathed in the dew of terror. It was long before his agitated nerves, and

disturbed mind, would allow him to believe that he had not taken the dreadful plunge—that he was safe. At length he became sufficiently composed to raise his head from his uneasy pillow, and gaze round his chamber. The expiring lamp told him it was past midnight; but though he knew some hours must elapse before he could expect to see the light of morning, he was fearful of again falling asleep, lest some new horror should assail his fancy; his dream was before him in its minutest particulars; his hair still seemed grasped by a powerful hand, and the voice yet sounded its awful warning in his ears.

Though little inclined to attend to what he considered mere vapours of the brain, engendered by mental suffering and continual brooding over peculiarly distressing circumstances, yet the yawning gulf, with all its horrors, and the impressive sentence—“*There is no repose for the suicide,*” would not quit his memory. Unable to rest, he rose from his couch, and throwing open the window of his chamber, gazed upon the sky; the dark clouds were dispersed, and the moon in

all her beauty was sinking behind the tall peak of the opposite mountain; the stars one by one disappeared from the deep blue expanse, and all above and around him seemed to move in obedience to the order of the great Creator,

“ By whose wisdom and power the heavens,
And the earth, and the ocean, were made;
And all the glories, the beauties, and wonders,
They contain.”

In this still hour, every object seemed to proclaim aloud the existence of a Deity, and to press upon the heart of Fitzgerald the certainty that religion was no dream of enthusiasm, or contrivance of craft, to subjugate and enslave the reason of man. —“ Surely,” said he, pressing his fingers on his forehead, “ surely my misfortunes have disturbed my brain. I have been mad; for what man of sane mind can behold the glories of the heavens, and be an atheist? The moon and stars retire before approaching day, but night sees them again holding their accustomed place in the sky, and pursuing the course that was appointed them on the day of their creation; and when man sinks to the grave,

and returns to dust, shall he, who was at the beginning ordained Lord of the vast universe, perish like the creatures that were made subject to him? shall not he, like those brilliant orbs that are now setting, rise again to immortality? Yes, yes, it must be so; and if his spirit rises, what will be his fate? will he become an angel or a fiend? what will be the self-destroyer's doom?"

Fitzgerald remembered his dream, and shuddered. After a meditative pause, he continued to say—"In this world there is certainly no annihilation; every thing returns to earth, and having suffered corruption, springs up again, in a new form of beauty or of usefulness. The annihilation I have wished, which I have sought, is then delusion—a temptation to lure me to perdition: yes, yes, the immortal spirit of man shall exist for ever, in happiness or misery. Oh thou, whose wisdom and power caused the wide-spreading universe, and this its glorious canopy, to spring out of chaos, give light to my distracted mind; and if thou seest fit that I should suffer disgrace and reproach, give me patience

and fortitude to support the load of wretchedness that bends me to the earth, and give me faith to believe that thou, who knowest I am guiltless of the crime for which I suffer here, wilt guide me to that blessed hereafter, where there is no injustice, no sorrow—where thou, wise and unerring, wilt judge with truth and mercy.”

As he thus prayed, the heart of Fitzgerald melted, and the unhappy man wept the first tears that had moistened his burning eyelids since he was torn from rank and fame. On his knees he supplicated mercy and pardon, for the pride that had rebelled against the Almighty will, that decreed he should be tried with affliction; and he humbly prayed to be directed and governed, in the thorny path he was yet to tread. The divine efficacy of prayer was felt by the suppliant; with his mind calmed, and confiding in his heavenly Judge, he returned to his couch, and soon sunk into a tranquil, dreamless sleep, that lasted till the morning was far advanced.

Fitzgerald's waking thoughts rested on the stranger, by whose timely interference he had been preserved from self-destruction.

tion; and he experienced a strong curiosity to discover which of his late wife's relations had made him the agent of their intended bounty; for to them alone the actual state of his affairs could be known, and that he had retired from his splendid home with a bare sufficiency to supply the necessaries of life; but poverty was to him a far less evil, with all its privations, than obligation—than being a dependant on persons he despised. He now blamed himself for having so abruptly dismissed the stranger; and he resolved to question him again, hoping he might be brought to disclose the name of his employer; but when Phelim entered with his breakfast, Fitzgerald learned that he had departed from the castle at dawn of day.

“I wished to confer with him again, but it matters not,” said he; “for he appeared too wary to be thrown off his guard, by any questions I might have asked.”

“He left this paper behind him,” resumed Phelim, “which he desired might be given to your honour when you arose.”

Fitzgerald opened the paper—it contained only the words—“If, on reflection,

your mind should change, or at any future period you should require pecuniary aid, address H. L. at the post-office, Gloucester."

For a few moments Fitzgerald stood ruminating, but his thoughts glanced on no person so likely to be the object of his anxious curiosity, as lady Wandesford; and felt certain, that no necessity, however severe, would induce him to solicit, or receive, pecuniary assistance from any member of a family whom he wished he had never known.

Having partaken of the breakfast placed before him, of which, to the great delight of Phelim, he ate more than usual, he descended to what had once been a magnificent library: but his father, who had little taste for literature, had parted with all that were valuable; and the few books that remained were more than half consumed by time and mildew. The wainscot of this apartment was of oak, divided into panels, on which was carved the arms of his family, with other devices, among which the shamrock was tastefully entwined.

Fitzgerald sighed; the wainscot was in many places decayed; the little furniture that remained in the room was worm-eaten, and falling to pieces.—“In a short time,” said he, mournfully, “every memorial of my ancestors will perish; these massy walls are crumbling, and soon the name of Fitzgerald shall be extinct—would it might be forgotten also! for coupled with dishonour, I wish it to fade from the memory of all.”

Fancying the desolation he beheld added to the oppression of his spirits, he endeavoured to open a door that led to the terrace, but the key, from disuse, had rusted in the lock, and resisted his efforts to turn it; he then attempted to open one of the Gothic windows, but perceived that it was snowing heavily. Shrinking from the cold wind, he took one of the mouldering volumes, and began to read the authentic history of Adolphus Schonenberg, who in the time of the crusades was taken prisoner by Saladin, and during twelve years of slavery, endured a variety of torments, among which he had his right eye, put out for looking at one of the

sultan's favourites, and his hand severed at the wrist, for attempting to separate the links of the chain with which he was every night fastened to a pillar in the cell where he slept.

"These were sufferings indeed!" said Fitzgerald, as he turned over several pages that damp and age had rendered illegible; "but these mutilations of his body, severe as they were, did not affect his fame and honour: what is the loss of eye or hand, compared with the deprivation of character? Adolphus Schonenberg was a valiant soldier; he had fought nobly under the banner of his leader; and when he returned to his native country, he was received with joyful acclamations by his family and friends, among whom he lived respected, and died honoured and lamented. How different," continued Fitzgerald, "is my fate! persecuted and driven from the world, stigmatized with unmerited crime, my days will never know the solace of friendship, or the bliss of family endearment; and when I die, my memory will be abhorred and execrated."

Again his thoughts, tenacious of suffer-

ing, brought forward the scenes of agonizing humiliation he had passed through; and while he remembered the proposal of escape made to him when in prison, and the pecuniary aid so recently offered him, he was struck with the idea, that the perpetrator of the crime for which he had so severely suffered, had sought to compensate the ignominy he had cast upon him, by offering him future support. Was it the real criminal who had planned, and by his agent persuaded him to fly from prison? There was a mystery in these repeated offers of friendship, that confirmed this belief; and he blamed himself for not having detained the stranger, till he gave up the name of his employer.—“By letting this man depart,” said Fitzgerald, “it is probable I have lost the opportunity of restoring my character, and another may never present itself: had I not been so hasty—had I but taken time to reflect—but I have been ever rash and impatient, and only see my errors when I suffer their consequences.”

While severely condemning himself for having so abruptly dismissed the stranger,

a noise at the opposite side of the room drew his attention, and looking up, he beheld a rat of enormous size, voraciously gnawing the gilt leather that hung from a chair. Snatching up the history of Adolphus Schonenberg, he threw it after the animal, endeavouring to escape under a decayed part of the wainscot; the rat found the aperture to which it had fled, too small to admit of its easy egress, and struggled so violently, that the loosened and decayed panel fell down, and discovered to Fitzgerald a small recess, in which was placed two urn-shaped vessels. Having summoned Phelim to assist in removing the dust and cobwebs, he found they contained gold coins, and curious ornaments of the same precious metal, studded with diamonds and other precious stones. Fitzgerald gazed on the treasure, so unexpectedly found, with astonishment; and while he gave Heaven thanks for removing the evils of poverty, and placing him above the necessity of incurring pecuniary obligation, Phelim laughed, and cried, and whistled, and danced, and snapped his fingers, and acted a thousand extravagancies, every

now and then saying—" Saint Patrick presarve the life of the old rat, that let his honour see the snug, cunning little closet where his ancestors hid their gold and jewels ! Och, sure now, nobody will presume to say a word against the castle being a rael elegant place, where the walls are lined with gold and diaments. Och, Phe-lim, my honey, its great luck you have got sure, to be living with a gentleman rich enough to buy all Ireland : but, dear master, for all there is not a place in the wide world to compare with little Erin, yet, for the sake of your health, do let us travel a bit, just till you are quite well, and then you can return and build up the walls, and set up the towers and gates of this old castle ; though, to speak the truth, there is many a healthier and prettier spot to be found than this same, with all these bleak rocky mountains about it, where there is such a plentiful scarcity of earth, that Alec says, he can hardly scrape enough together to raise paratees for the supply of the family."

" I have now the means," replied Fitzgerald, pointing to the gold, " to reward

your long-tried faithful services, Phelim: my first care shall be, to place you above the fear of want; you shall quit this dreary spot; you shall return home, and make your parents happy."

"Sure and have not they Dennis, and Teague, and Debby, to make them happy?" returned Phelim, his countenance becoming suddenly grave; "and did not they tell me, when your honour's father died, that I must never leave you, but that I must stay and try to keep up your spirits, and serve you honestly and faithfully, day and night? Och now, master Gerald, your honour, I mean, and what have I done now, that you should think of sending me home? sorrow a bit of happiness is there in that word at all sure; if I spoke disrespectfully of this old ru——castle I mean, I humbly beg pardon for making so bold as to say any thing against it; I only thought it lonesome for you to live here, because you have been used to gay doings and grand company."

"All which I now detest," returned Fitzgerald; "the temper of my mind is altered; I have lost all relish for society,

and could be content to wear out my life in this desolate spot, without other companions than the dreary mountains, and the rushing stream: these, indeed, present a savage visage to the eye, but are more friendly than they seem; for they will not deny me space to rest my wearied frame, or refuse me water to slake my thirst; they will not accuse me of a crime my soul shudders at; they will not manacle my limbs, or stain my honourable name with disgrace and infamy; but you, Phelim," continued he, in a calmer voice—"you, Phelim, have no cause to hate the world; it has not treated you with injury and injustice; and I will give you gold to buy its respect and favour; you shall quit this place."

"No, begging your honour's pardon," replied Phelim, "not while you prefer to remain here; Saint Patrick knows I am quite content to stay wherever you choose to reside; and sure now, I must have been bewitched to speak a word in disparagement of such a pleasant, elegant——"

"Phelim, Phelim!" interrupted Fitzgerald, "I must not suffer your attach-

ment to overcome my sense of right; I feel your kindness most sensibly, but cannot, much as I prize your services, allow you to bury yourself in this solitude: you are young, and having made a worthy choice, may marry and live happily in the midst of your children."

"And leave you to grow melancholy in this old ruin? Divil ever did I see the girl, that had blarney enough in her eyes, or her tongue either, to persuade me to leave my master, and tie myself to her. No, no, may I be d—d if I do.—Master Gerald, dear master Gerald," continued Phelim, falling on his knees before the deeply-affected Fitzgerald, "do not break my heart; I will dig for you, beg for you, starve with you, but I will never leave you. Did not we grow up childer together? and did not you save my life when I fell into the pond? and did not you put your shoulder out in stopping the horse that ran away with me? Och, honey master," said he, bursting into tears, "bad manners to me, if ever I am such an ungrateful spalpeen as to leave you."

Fitzgerald extended his hand to raise

the faithful creature from the earth, sobbing like a child. Phelim pressed his master's hand to his lips, but would not quit his suppliant posture, till he received a promise, that in weal or woe, he should stay with him, as long as it was his own desire to remain.

The treasure, so unexpectedly found by Fitzgerald, was, in his present frame of mind, of little service. On going round the castle, he was convinced that it was in a state of such absolute decay, as to render the possibility of repairing it hopeless; but weak from recent illness, and miserably depressed in spirits, he fancied he should not live long, and the apartments he inhabited would keep out rain and wind, as long as he needed them.

Possessed with this spirit of melancholy, it is probable he might have continued to drag out the remaining years of his existence in the old ruin, as Phelim very justly called it, had not a newspaper brought round some article from the neighbouring town, inspired a resolution of joining the troops raising for the service of India,

where war was expected with a native prince.

Never was joy greater than Phelim's, when, at the command of his master, he placed a well-filled purse in the hand of Cauthleen, and told her to send Alec to fetch her children and grandchildren to live with her at the castle.

"Here at the castle!" repeated the old woman; "bad manners to you, mister Phelim, its joking you are."

"Take the gold, I tell you," said Phelim; "it is yours, every thirteener of it; my master and I are going to the wars."

"Wars!" screamed Cauthleen—"what, are we going to have more murdering and burning? Och, sure now and I wish I was dead and buried, even without being waked. War in Ireland! they will surely take Alec and Rory for soggers."

"Och, be easy now, and do not be after blubbering and making a hubababoo about nothing at all," said Phelim; "there is no war in Ireland; my master and I are going to gain honour and renown beyond seas; and you are to take care that nobody

runs away with the castle and the mountains while we are away."

"And what am I to do with Brindle?" asked Cauthleen.

"The cow is it you are asking about?" returned Phelim; "faith now, that is a mighty silly sort of a question; has not Judy got childer, and do not childer love milk? Sure now, when I am on the salt seas, it is myself that will often be thinking of poor Brindle, and wishing for a mess of buttermilk and paratees."

"What, am I to have the cow? saint Patrick be praised, I shall be rich in my old age," said Cauthleen; "but the grey mare, Phelim honey, what is to become of the grey mare?"

"Keep it, or sell it, just as you like," replied Phelim, "and all that his honour leaves behind him in the castle."

"What, all the new furniture that was brought from Armagh?" asked the old woman.

"Every stick of it," said Phelim; "it is all yours."

"Mine!" exclaimed Cauthleen, clapping her hands; "here is luck I am

tumbled into ! sure and it's myself that is born to be somebody ; such an elegant place to live in, a purse full of gold, a cow, a grey mare, and a large patch of paratees : but it is joking you are, Phelim—all this great big heap of riches never can be mine."

"Faith now, there is' no joke in the case," replied Phelim ; "it is all yours ; my master, Mr. Fitzgerald, gives it you with all his heart, and I give it you with all mine ; and may saint Patrick put his blessing upon it, and do you good with it."

The old woman, in the fullness of her heart, was for going on the instant to Mr. Fitzgerald's apartment, to thank him for having made a lady of her ; but this impulse of gratitude was prevented by Phelim, who had received orders from his master not to suffer the garrulous Cauthleen to oppress him with her thanks.

Two years had nearly elapsed since the terrible event took place that drove the unfortunate Gerald Fitzgerald to the dreary solitude of Armagh Castle ; he had entered it with a fevered body, and fren-

zied brain. Time and reflection had calmed, in some degree, the violence of his feelings; he shuddered at the atheistical opinions he had once encouraged, and no longer meditated self-destruction: but hopeless of regaining the place he had lost in society, life was of no value in his eyes; and his only incentive to become a soldier, was the hope that in India he might gain an honourable grave.

When Phelim left the castle, his spirits were light, and his heart full of hope; he rejoiced to think he should soon have companions more suited to his own gay temper, than old Cauthleen, and her stupid grandson Alec; while Fitzgerald, as he cast a last look on the castle, frowning in ruin, and the mountains, rearing their brown and steril heads in melancholy grandeur, felt neither joy nor hope.

“ And then, it may be, of his wish to roam
Repented he, but in his bosom slept
The silent thought.”

Without any desire of his own to remain a single day in Ireland, Fitzgerald determined to indulge Phelim's wish, and delay his journey, while the affectionate-

hearted fellow went to take leave of his parents; but disliking to remain at an inn, where he was liable to encounter persons acquainted with his disastrous story, he resolved to be Phelim's companion to his native village, and to trust to Providence for accommodations, which, however humble, he was satisfied to put up with.

Within a mile of the cabin inhabited by Phelim's parents, rose the proud turrets of Doneraile Castle; and sad were the thoughts of Fitzgerald, as he passed the gates through which his carriage had entered, when, with his wife, he had gone to visit her aunt, the countess of Vandeleur, who, though she received, never looked with a favourable eye on him, her heretic husband. The sudden death of lady Amanda, and his uncertainty respecting her child, hung heavily on the mind of Fitzgerald; and this sadness was not lessened, by finding the only house of entertainment in the village had for its sign the Vandeleur Arms, and was kept by a man who had recently left the service of the earl: strictly charging Phelim to call

him Mr. Morton, and to say he was an Englishman, travelling through Ireland for pleasure, he entered the inn, as the landlord proudly called it; and without being recognised, so much had sickness and grief altered his person, was shewn to a decently-furnished apartment, which he engaged for a week.

It being evening when he arrived, he took some refreshment, and retired to bed, dismissing the happy Phelim to the enjoyment of his home and early friends: fatigued in mind and body, Fitzgerald's heavy eyelids soon closed, and he passed a night of undisturbed sleep, from which he had but just awoke, when Phelim entered his chamber. While assisting him to dress, his master observed that his face was full of intelligence; and he inquired if he had found his parents and his brothers and sister well?

"All of them quite well, I thank your honour," replied Phelim: "Debby is gone to live at the castle; but the family are away at Dublin, to stay a month; and your honour can walk in the park, with-

out fear of meeting any body that will know you."

"There are other places I shall prefer to walk in," replied Fitzgerald; "the earl of Vandeleur and me were never friends at heart; and the countess, a greater bigot than her husband, never pardoned her niece, for bestowing her hand on me, a heretic. No, I have no wish to intrude upon their premises; I will not walk in their park."

"Yet if your honour knew——" Phelim paused. "I wish your honour would be persuaded to take a walk, after breakfast, near the great oak that they say is above a hundred years old."

"And wherefore," asked Fitzgerald, "should I walk near the great oak? you certainly must have some reason for this. Speak out, Phelim—what do you mean?"

"Why, since your honour commands me, I must speak," said Phelim: "my aunt Norah is——"

"Is what?" demanded Fitzgerald. "Why do you hesitate? If your aunt wants any assistance I can render her, why does she not come to me here, without

troubling me to walk to a place, the sight of which will only serve to recal painful remembrances ?”

“ To be sure your honour is quite right ; and Norah would be proud to come here, only she thought M·Fane, the landlord, who is a grèat favourite with the earl, would just be after reporting her up at the castle, and she might lose her place ; and so, your honour, she cannot wait upon you here ; and I thought——”

“ You thought,” interrupted Fitzgerald, impatiently, “ that I would intrude myself into the park of my enemy ! No, no ; if your aunt wants money, take my purse, and give her the sum she has occasion for, which, after all, will be much more agreeable to me, for I shall avoid receiving thanks.”

“ My aunt,” said Phelim, rejecting the purse, “ does not want money ; and instead of paying thanks, might expect to receive them.”

“ My thanks !” returned Fitzgerald ; “ what service can she render me, that should deserve my thanks ?”

“ I did not presume to suppose she could do your honour any service,” replied

Phelim; "but, sure now, I thought she might be after doing you a small bit of pleasure, by giving you a sight of your honour's daughter, Miss Fitzgerald."

"My daughter!—have I a daughter?" exclaimed Fitzgerald, with great emotion.

"Yes; and by saint Patrick, a great beauty she is," said Phelim; "bless her sweet face, she is made all of roses, and lilies, and stars."

"And though I cautioned you against mentioning my name, you have disobeyed my command," said Fitzgerald, sternly, "and acquainted your aunt."

"No," replied Phelim; "I have always respected your honour's orders, and my own word too," added he, proudly; "and if you will please to hear me, I will tell you all about it."

"Say on," said Fitzgerald, his heart agitated, and his nerves trembling, as he thought of the babe deprived by death of the tender care of its mother, and fated to be brought up a stranger to the affection of its father.

"Please your honour," resumed Phelim, "I went this morning early to the castle,

to see my aunt Norah, who told me that she was engaged by the countess to nurse lady Amanda Fitzgerald's babe, for the English nurse did not like Ireland, and would go back to her own country; though she promised lady Amanda, when she lay on her death-bed, that she would go to Ireland with the earl and countess of Vandeleur, and remain with the child as long as she needed a nurse; but the servants being all Catholics, she found her situation not so pleasant as she expected; and not liking to be called a heretic, she resigned the situation."

"But what has the resigning of the English nurse to do with my seeing the child?" asked Fitzgerald.

"Och now and I shall be after coming to that directly," replied Phelim: "the servants, bad manners to them, coming into the room one after the other, interrupted our conversation, and so Norah told me in my ear, she always walked out in the park about twelve o'clock, to give little Miss an airing, and I might meet her at the big oak, where we could have our talk out without interruption; and I

thought if your honour was to take a walk that way, you might meet us just by accident, and aunt Norah be never the wiser that you are the little angel's father."

"It is an excellent plan, Phelim, and much as I dislike intruding on the premises of the earl of Vandeleur, the strong desire I feel to behold my child, will constrain me to overcome my repugnance. Go, Phelim," continued Fitzgerald, "go to your appointment with your aunt—I will follow you."

Among the treasures found by Fitzgerald at Armagh Castle, was a curiously-wrought gold chain, from which was suspended an ornament formed like a sun; the centre of this splendid trinket was a large diamond, that gave, and received lustre from, rays composed of emerald, ruby, topaz, and amethyst; this, with some other jewels useless to him, Fitzgerald intended to dispose of when he reached England; but he now destined it for a gift to his daughter; and placing it in his bosom, he pursued his way through the park to the ancient oak, seated under

whose venerable and gigantic boughs, he beheld a fine healthy-looking woman, and standing beside her, Phelim, with the beautiful child in his arms, who crowed and seemed delighted as he tossed her about. A sensation unfelt till that moment, brought tears to the eyes of Fitzgerald, and made him long to clasp the beauteous innocent babe to his heart; after a few moments' struggle with his weakness, he approached, and constrained himself to ask Norah several questions respecting the stay of the earl and countess of Vandeleur at Dublin, endeavouring to lead her into a belief that he was a friend of theirs, who had but recently returned from a foreign country; but while he conversed with Norah, his eyes followed every motion of the child, till unable to command his feelings, he took it from the arms of Phelim, and clasping it to his bosom, wept over it the sacred tears of parental affection.

“Sure now and you knew this dear babe's mother,” said Norah, “or you would never weep in this way, for, blessings on her sweet face, the child is well and hearty,

and as lively and merry as a bird in the spring."

"Yes, I did know her mother," replied Fitzgerald; "but my tears are not for her, they fall for this innocent creature," continued he, covering the child's face with tender kisses, as her little arms instinctively clasped his neck; "I weep to think that a time may come, when she will lament that she has no parents to counsel and shield her from error and outrage."

"The dear child has lost her mother to be sure," returned Norah, weeping for sympathy, "but Mr. Fitzgerald is alive; and though he is under a bit of a cloud just now, there are many in these parts that think he will come out again, brighter than ever, and I for one believe it, and hope and pray for it daily and nightly; and then Miss Fitzgerald may be proud to own her rightful name, though she is called Miss Lambart now, and we are all told to say she is lord Lambart's daughter, the cousin of lady Amanda, that was killed in a duel the other day, and whose wife lost her life through the fright, after bringing a dead son into the world."

Fitzgerald had become so pale, and appeared so agitated while Norah was speaking, that Phelim took the child from him.

“ Oh my poor babe !” exclaimed Fitzgerald, “ even to the name of thy father thou wilt be a stranger ; but it is better so ; his disgrace will not attach to thee ; bearing the name of Lambart, thou wilt be honoured and respected, while thy father, treasuring thy image in his heart, wanders a wretched exile, far from thee and happiness.”

Fitzgerald covered his face with his hands, and uttering deep and heavy sighs, seemed to suffer agonizing distress ; the sound of a bell at length roused him, and on Norah saying she must return to the castle, or she should be sought after, Fitzgerald again pressed fond and eager kisses on the cheek of the smiling babe, round whose ivory neck he hung the splendid chain before described, at the same time forcing his purse on the reluctant Norah, who unwillingly received his present, declaring that she loved the sweet babe as well to the full as if it was her own, and

there was no need to be after bribing her to do her duty.

“ I do not mean it as a bribe, Norah,” said Fitzgerald, “ but as an acknowledgment of your kindness and care of this babe.”

“ And how am I to account for this chain?” asked Norah; “ who am I to tell the countess put it on the child’s neck? Must I say it was her father, for sure now I believe you are Mr. Fitzgerald?”

“ Say it was a gentleman you accidentally met in the park,” returned Fitzgerald, “ who asked you many questions respecting the family, and bade the child wear the chain, for the sake of him who would ever be interested for her welfare, and hoped at some future time to become known to her.”

Phelim, who had walked a little way towards the castle, now hurrying back, gave Norah notice that one of the footmen was crossing the park. Fitzgerald pressed his lips on the forehead and cheek of his daughter, and resigned her to the care of Norah, who, uttering many blessings and good wishes on the generous gentleman,

hurried away, leaving Fitzgerald gratified and pleased that he had seen his child, though sorrowing with the belief that he should behold her no more.

When he returned to his lonely apartment at the inn, he could think only of his child, whose lovely image was still present to his "*mind's eye*;" he spoke of her with such melting tenderness, and lamented the necessity of parting from her with such bursts of sorrow, that Phelim, moved with the distress of his master, said — "Faith now! and I can see no necessity to part from the sweet little darling, at all at all; if your honour will but just speak the word, I will soon be after persuading aunt Norah to bear us company to India; and who knows but the creature may be picking up a rich husband among the nabobs there? for she is fresh and fair, and shapely enough to look at; and if she should be sick at sea, I can nurse little miss; and sure now, who is so fit to have the pleasure of her pretty engaging company as her own father?"

"And if I should be fated to die in India," returned Fitzgerald, "if I should

fall in battle, what would become of the poor innocent, a desolate orphan, among strangers in a foreign land?"

Phelim's countenance fell; he looked sad, as he thought of the possibility of his master's death; but he presently answered—"The child of my master would never want a protector, as long as I have an arm to defend her; and Norah, her foster-mother, would never forsake her."

"I believe it," replied Fitzgerald; "but I dare not take her from a safe and peaceful home, to expose her to the tumult of camps, and the chances of war; for her sake I must relinquish the gratification her presence would afford me. I might indeed demand my child, but her interest, her safety, forbid my asserting the right of a father; she must remain under the guardianship of her mother's relations, who will bring her up in ignorance of our affinity—they will teach her to hate the name of Fitzgerald. Thus to leave her, and with the belief that we shall meet no more in this life, is a thought of agony; but to the care of Heaven I commit my babe, and pray that the story of her father's dis-

grace may never wound her ear, or in any way attach to her."

Phelim did not at all approve his master's decision, for he thought the child would have amused, and drawn him from dwelling so constantly on his misfortunes; but he knew it was his duty to be silent; and in his subsequent conversations with Norah, he found it would have been a hopeless task to persuade her to quit Ireland, for the very idea of going to sea was terrible to her; and had it been possible to shake his attachment to his master, she would have prevailed on Phelim to stay in his own country—"Where, thanks be to blessed St. Patrick!" said Norah, "there are no venomous reptiles, and in India, I have heard, you meet serpents and wild beasts at every turning."

Much as Fitzgerald desired to see his daughter again, he avoided the park, and all walks near the castle; for she was already inexpressibly dear to his heart, and he felt that another parting would be more than he could endure. Most anxiously he waited for the expiration of the week that he had promised Phelim he should

remain with his relations, for he found his vicinity to the child he did not dare to acknowledge, increased the dejection of his mind, and added to the wretchedness of his situation. Content and cheerfulness seemed to brighten every countenance he met, while taking his solitary rambles.—“They have all,” said he, mentally, “families, friends, or connections, loving and beloved, while I, an isolated being, have no share in the affections, the expectations, or the prayers of my fellow-men.”

Wearied of himself, and every thing about him, Fitzgerald listened to the rain beating against the window, and cast his eye round his apartment, with a look of despondency, for he saw no object with which he could occupy himself, while the weather constrained him to remain within.

Having sent Phelim to inquire if Mrs. M'Fane had a book she could lend him, he received for answer, that she had not a book belonging to her—she had no time for such nonsense as reading; her husband said they could employ themselves to more profit than idling over books.

Fitzgerald threw himself on a chair

near the window, and watched the clouds pouring from their dark bosoms the rain that ran in a stream through the middle of the village, and threatened to make a prisoner of him for the day; his own thoughts were miserable companions, and these for a long time pressed their dismal reminiscences on him, only interrupted by the shrill voice of Mrs. M'Fane, as she issued her commands to the drudges employed in the household business. At last Phelim appeared, with a small volume of poems he had borrowed from the village school-master: the titlepage informed Fitzgerald it was a posthumous work, and the contents induced a belief that the author had "*borne the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune.*" The poems were not such as a fastidious critic would approve or commend, but their style and subjects were congenial with the disappointed hopes and blighted prospects of Fitzgerald's: the lines that first met his eye appeared so applicable to his wife's sudden death, that had not the date of the book convinced him it was printed before lady Amanda was born, he would have believed

the poet designed to commemorate her beauty, and her premature fate; but though certain this could not be the case, they strongly recalled her to his memory, young, lovely, and in the enjoyment of wealth, none of which were sufficient to save her from death; and he sighed, as he read—

LINES ON THE DEATH OF EDITH.

Fair one, thy beauty soon has faded—

What art thou now ?

A pale corpse, by the dark grave shaded,

Thy charms laid low.

Just like a rose at day-dawn blushing,

Snapp'd from its stem :

So death, upon thy beauty rushing,

Cropp'd thee, bright gem.

Wealth could not bribe the stern arrest,

Or win delay ;

Death's seal hath on thy brow imprest,

“ For worms a prey.”

Hark ! upon the night-wind flying,

I hear thy knell ;

Sadly on my ear 'tis sighing,

“ Edith, farewell !”

—“ Nor could all the pomp of wealth, the dignity of rank, save thee from death, Amanda,” said Fitzgerald ; “ in the dark grave, thy beauty is preyed upon by the

worm ; what a lesson for pride and vanity ! but the spirit," continued he, referring to the book, " of the undying spirit, the poet says nothing—clouds and darkness rest upon that subject ; but let me hope, Amanda, that all thy errors are forgiven, and in that realm where mercy reigns, thy spirit lives in happiness." The time of his introduction to lady Amanda Lambart rose on Fitzgerald's recollection ; it was at a ball at Dublin, when struck with her beauty, he had solicited the honour of her hand, and led her, all smiles, to join the dancers. How much was he then envied—how many of his gay companions congratulated him on the attention with which she distinguished him !—" Fatal distinction !" said Fitzgerald ; " had she never fancied she loved me, or had my weak nature been proof against the allurements of wealth, I might, at this moment, have been happy ; but marriage was the rock on which peace, reputation, all that rendered existence valuable, have been lost ! but she is dead, and I remain to rove about the world, like an unquiet spirit, wretched and hopeless

of regaining the bright eminence from which I have been hurled."

Fitzgerald paced the narrow limits of his chamber with perturbed steps. Pausing before the window, his restless eyes followed the commingling clouds, that spread in black masses over the face of the sky, where not a speck of blue gave the promise of returning sunshine; the rain continued to fall heavily, and the wind, howling in melancholy gusts, rattled the ill-constructed door and window of the apartment, adding to his mental sufferings a bodily sense of uncomfortable chilliness, which the fire, made of green wood, did not much contribute to remove.—"To-morrow," resumed Fitzgerald, "the sun will come forth in his brightness, and the earth will rejoice at his presence: but will his beams dispel the gloom of my heart? alas for me! no—sunshine or storm are alike to me, the blossoms of whose youth are blighted—whose only hope is to forget my wrongs and sorrows in the grave." Seating himself before the fire, that, hissing and crackling, began to throw out a reluc-

tant blaze, he again resumed the little volume of poems, and read—

LINES, ON QUITTING MY NATIVE LAND.

While far from the shore of green Erin I'm hasting,
The land of my fathers—the home of my love,
Oh surely with sorrow my heart will be wasting,
Whatever the region I'm fated to rove;
For though other realms with gay pleasure may smile,
I still shall prefer my own Emerald Isle.

Oh there, when in childhood I climb'd the steep mountain,
Health glow'd on my cheek, transport throb'd in my breast;
How soft was the moss that I press'd by the fountain—
How sweet were the visions that stole on my rest!
While bright from the sky the sun seem'd to smile—
To gladden my dreams in the Emerald Isle.

Dear haunts of my youth, no time will remove
From memory's record how lovely you are;
Your mountains and streams will in fancy improve,
And seem, when far distant, more verdant and fair;
Deep, deep shall I sigh, when I see others smile,
For the joys I have left in the Emerald Isle.

Oh, pulse of my heart! believe not, though parting,
I e'er shall forget—but professions are vain:
Believe, by the tears from my eyelids now starting,
That I seal this last kiss with emotions of pain:
But cheer thee, ador'd one, kind fortune may smile,
And restore me to thee—and the Emerald Isle.

“The poet when leaving his country,” said Fitzgerald, “carried with him a warm hope of return; and when parting from

the object of his love, cheered her and himself with an expectation of future happiness; I, alas! have neither hope nor expectation; I have sealed my last kiss on the lips of my child, the only object for whom I feel affection; and I quit the land of my birth without a wish to return, and with this only hope—‘*To win a stranger’s grave in a strange land.*’

The week promised to Phelim had terminated; to him it had seemed very short, but to Fitzgerald long and tedious. Impatient to be gone from Ireland, he settled his account with M’Fane, who sincerely regretted the departure of a guest who gave little or no trouble, and paid his bill without the least demur; and hastened to Cork, at which port he embarked for England.

Phelim did not part from his parents, or leave his native village, without feeling sorrow at his heart; but he was warmly attached to his master, and he wished to see the world; yet when he lost sight of the Irish shore, his eyes filled with tears, and he exclaimed, waving his adieu with outstretched hand—“ Well, sure then,

and great luck to you, my own dear little Ireland! saint Patrick's blessing be upon you, musha! much prosperity to you, my darling! and may I be after coming back to see you in all your glory!"

Fitzgerald, on his arrival in London, took lodgings in a private street, and visiting no public places, he hoped to escape meeting any of his former acquaintance, and to negociate, without the mortification of being known, the purchase of a commission, which would enable him to leave a country, where he had received the worst injury a proud and honourable spirit could experience. But the trials of the unfortunate Fitzgerald were not yet at an end—his pride was to sustain another shock; by a bitter lesson of disappointment and mortification, he was to be taught patience to bear the evils of this life, and resignation to the Almighty will, by being "*steeped in calamity to the very lips.*"—On the morning he expected to conclude the purchase of a captain's commission, in a regiment raising for the service of India, he received a letter, advising him not to throw away his money, for the offi-

cers of the regiment into which he was desirous of purchasing, had one and all resolved to shun every kind of intercourse with him, who, though, he had luckily escaped, would always be considered worthy of the punishment of a felon.

To this cruel and insulting letter there appeared several names; but Fitzgerald saw them not—a mist darkened his sight—the fatal scroll was crushed in his clenched hand—his teeth became set—and he fell from his chair in a swoon. The noise of his fall recalled Phelim to the apartment, who, crying loudly for assistance, bore him to his bed; but it was long before he evinced any sign of recollection, though by the advice of a physician who had been called in, he had been bled, and every means had been resorted to, usual in such cases. It was late in the evening when he spoke, and then so incoherently, that Phelim believed his senses were quite lost: but though a brain fever had seized on the unfortunate Fitzgerald, the terrible consequence of the shock he had received from the letter, the physician, skilful in

his profession, cheered the almost despairing Phelim with hopes of his recovery.

Many melancholy weeks passed, during which his faithful servant scarcely left his bedside before Fitzgerald was declared out of danger. When able to bear the motion of a carriage, he was removed for change of air to pleasant lodgings at Hackney; but though he appeared to gather strength, Phelim saw with dismay that his temper was altered as much as his person: every kind and generous feeling of his heart seemed frozen up—sternness and gloom had settled on his handsome features—his fine open forehead was contracted with a perpetual frown—his voice, which used to be cheerful and exhilarating, had become hoarse and discordant—his tall majestic form, remarked for grace and elegance, had acquired a stoop, which gave him the appearance of an aged man—and as he moved about his apartments, with slow and measured step, Phelim thought he looked like a living skeleton.

The physician, who continued to visit him, had sense enough to perceive that his patient had a malady no medicine

could reach; he knew he could not "*minister to a mind diseased*," or "*pluck out a rooted sorrow*;" but he was convinced that confinement to his chamber, and living without society, would increase rather than heal Fitzgerald's distemper; he therefore, following the dictates of conscience and humanity, seriously advised that he should seek amusement for his mind.

"You would have me read," said Fitzgerald.

"No," replied the physician, "I would have you travel, and seek entertainment in new scenes and new objects. A short excursion by sea would be of great advantage to your health; and as a friend, I recommend you to winter in a warmer climate."

"I have no wish to live," replied Fitzgerald, mournfully.

"Are you prepared to die?" asked the physician; "without presuming to inquire into your secret sorrows, Mr. Fitzgerald, or the reason why a man so young as you are, have taken such a hatred to society, and seem so determined to with-

draw yourself from all intercourse with the world, I consider it my duty, as a Christian, to tell you that you commit sin, if you neglect every means in your power to prolong your life ; and you will pardon me if I add, that only cowards invite death ; the truly brave man combats his misfortunes with the weapons supplied by religion, faith in the justice of his Maker, and submission to the divine will. You asked me if I advised you to read—yes,” continued the physician, “ I recommend you seriously to read the Bible ; you will find in it many precious balsams for a wounded heart ; and I am persuaded you will obtain from its perusal, strength to bear the evils of this life, a disposition to pity and forgive your enemies, and a blessed hope of meeting, in another world, an ample recompence for all the troubles you may be fated to suffer in this.”

Fitzgerald, though he had never encouraged vice, had hitherto paid little attention to religion, farther than a mere observance of its forms ; but after the departure of the friendly physician, he be-

gan to turn his eyes inward on himself, to reflect that he had lived as if there was no Supreme Being, whose goodness demanded praise and thanks, or whose displeasure was to be deprecated by penitence and supplication.—“My misfortunés,” said Fitzgerald, “are the punishments of my ingratitude; I gave no thanks for the blessings I enjoyed, and they were torn from me; I fancied I stood on firm ground, and it crumbled beneath my feet; and even when I was hurled into the horrible pit, I saw not the error of my ways. Oh thou Omnipotent! who hast humbled my pride, who hast given me to know that I am but a worm, an atom in thy sight, teach me to resign myself to thy will, to acknowledge my punishments are the just reward of my offences, and enable me to cherish life, till thou, in thy wisdom and mercy, seest fit to release me from its misery.”

When Phelim attended to undress him, his voice had regained something of its former tone; his manner was less impatient; and when he gave him the medicine he still continued to take, he swallowed it

without evincing any reluctance.—“ I feel better to-night,” said Fitzgerald.

“ It does my heart good to hear your honour say so,” replied Phelim; “ that last prescription of the doctor’s——”

“ It has been of infinite service to me,” interrupted Fitzgerald. “ Good night, Phelim; procure me a Bible, and let me find it on my breakfast-table in the morning.”

For some days Fitzgerald devoted the chief of his time to studying the Holy Scriptures; and he found they were indeed health to his soul, and renovation to his body; his temper became more placid; his hatred of mankind was much softened; he forgave his enemies, but felt he could not so far conquer his pride, and rise above human infirmity, as to bear the scorn and neglect of his former associates; he therefore saw the necessity of going where himself and his unhappy story were unknown, where he might sit down respected among honourable men.

Montpellier being recommended by his physician, he resolved to try the effect of its salubrious air; and having converted

part of his jewels and ancient coins into cash, and bills of exchange upon foreign banks, the rest of his preparations were soon made for quitting England.

Fitzgerald took leave of his worthy physician, with kinder sentiments than he thought he should ever feel again for any human being. When he arrived at Dover, he found a packet ready to sail for Calais; and Phelim had scarcely time to stow the luggage, before they were summoned on board. The weather being mild, Fitzgerald declined increasing the number in the cabin, which was already crowded to inconvenience. Seating himself on deck, he listened to the rippling of the waves, and gazed on the cliff made immortal by the pen of Shakespeare, till its towering head receded from his view.

“Farewell,” said a passenger, who was leaning over the side of the vessel; “may I quickly return to thee, land of the generous and the brave.”

“Rather say, farewell to the land of injustice and oppression,” thought Fitzgerald; “for may I be borne from a country where I have experienced so much of

wretchedness! may the name of Fitzgerald be forgotten, and may I forget I ever breathed the air of England!"

This wish was in part accomplished, for after travelling through France, Italy, and Swisserland, Fitzgerald visited the Grecian Islands, still retaining near his person the faithful Phelim; and many years performed ^{the} ~~their~~ round, before the much-injured fugitive was again heard of by those in England who were interested in his fate.

" Yet though his bosom still retain'd a sad
Remembrance of the past, meek-eyed Content
Had soften'd down the violence of grief."

CHAP. II.

She walks in beauty, like the night
Of cloudless climes and starry skies;
And all that's best of dark and bright
Meet in her aspect and her eyes :
Thus mellow'd to that tender light
Which heaven to gaudy day denies.

One shade the more, one ray the less,
Had half impair'd the nameless grace
Which waves in every raven tress,
Or softly lightens o'er her face ;
Where thoughts serenely sweet express
How pure, how dear, their dwelling-place.

And on that cheek, and o'er that brow,
So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,
The smiles that win, the tints that glow,
But tell of days in goodness spent—
A mind at peace with all below,
A heart where all is innocent!

LORD BYRON.

LISBURN Abbey was built at a very remote period, when strength and durability in architecture, were considered much more than convenience or elegance; it was a heavy Gothic pile, with long narrow windows, sunk so deep in the massy walls, that the sunbeams never reached beyond

the middle of the immense apartments, except in the height of summer, when they paid a short morning visit to the tapestried walls of the grand reception-room, and just threw a hasty smile on the dark wainscot of the oak parlour, the usual sitting-room of the baroness Wandesford, which was carved with uncouth figures of men's heads, united to bodies of beast, fish, and fowl, chained together with as grotesque representations of shells, trees, fruits, and flowers. But the gloom of the building was in some degree compensated by its delightful situation, which commanded a sublime and extensive prospect of wood, mountains, and water, intersected with a rich variety of cultivated fields and pasture grounds.

Near one of the windows in the before-described oak parlour, sat Ada Lambart, a beautiful girl, whose appearance spoke her "*just no longer child.*" She had a pencil in her fingers, and before her lay an unfinished group of flowers, to which she was giving some improving touches.

Beside a bright wood fire, supported by highly-polished dog-irons, sat the baroness

Wandesford, with a reading-stand before her, on which lay a richly-bound folio Bible, in which, according to her usual custom, she had been reading after breakfast. While wiping her spectacles, she saw that Ada, forgetful of her employment, was leaning, with a very thoughtful, if not melancholy countenance, with her cheek resting on her hand.—“What is the matter, my love?” asked the baroness, in a tone of tender anxiety; “you do not seem in your usual spirits to-day. I hope you are not ill?”

“No, aunt,” replied Miss Lambart, with a faint smile; “I am not ill, but——”

“But what, my love? Pray speak out,” said lady Wandesford; “I am really alarmed to see you look so grave.”

“There is not the least cause for alarm,” returned Ada, raising her beautiful dark hazel eyes to meet the anxious gaze of her aunt; “I was only thinking that I had much rather remain here, than go to Doneraile Castle.”

“What! rather stay here, with an old woman who has given up the pomps and pleasures of the world?” said lady Wandes-

ford: "Ada, Ada, this is downright flattery."

"No, believe me," replied Ada, taking a chair beside her aunt, "I love you better than any human being, and prefer Lisburn Abbey to any other place in the world."

"You would be accused of bad taste, my Ada," said the baroness, "if it ~~was~~ suspected you preferred my ~~society~~ before that of the gay fashionable countess of Vandeleur; besides, you seem to forget, that having reached the womanly age of sixteen, the countess intends to celebrate the important epocha with all the pomp and ceremony the occasion demands; among which, a splendid ball is to be given, to which all the young and fashionable in the country are invited."

"I see," replied Ada, "by your manner of expression, aunt, that you think it too early to introduce me into life, and that it would have been better to let me continue a child a year or two longer; and indeed, so do I, for I see a great many inconveniences and privations will result from my commencing woman. Well as I love dancing,

I am sorry a ball is to be given on my account; and, in short, I have no wish to go to Doneraile Castle. As long as I can remember, I always thought the time long that I passed with the countess, and was delighted to return to you. Indeed, indeed, aunt," continued Ada, pressing her rosy lips on the pale cheek of the baroness, "I had much rather not go."

"But in this matter, my Ada," returned lady Wandesford, "neither you nor I have a choice, the will of your mother having appointed that you shall pass six months alternately with the earl and countess of Vandeleur and me, till you attain the age of twenty, at which time you are to be put in possession of your fortune, and of course, chuse your own place of residence."

"The last time I was at Doneraile Castle," said Ada, "there was a Mr. Burke, a distant relation of the earl's, who was perpetually reading me lectures on the subject of my religion, and finding he could not convert me to the Catholic faith, was often very rude in his behaviour to me."

"And what part did the earl and coun-

tess take in this matter?" asked the baroness.

"Little or none," replied Ada; "the countess of Vandeleur, though she attends mass, and expresses pity for heretics, does not trouble herself with making proselytes; the earl is a Catholic, because all his family are of that persuasion. I never recollect his noticing Mr. Burke's extraordinary zeal for my conversion but once, and then his lordship said—'I recommend you as a friend, Miss Lambart, to pay a serious attention to the arguments and advice of Mr. Burke, who has spent the greatest part of his life in the study and examination of the two religions, and has the very best authority to pronounce the Catholic to be the true faith.' However, I continued obstinate; and one day, being urged rather harshly by Mr. Burke, I asked the countess—whether the will of my mother did not expressly enjoin my guardians to leave my religion to my own free choice?—'Certainly, Miss Lambart,' replied the countess, 'there is such a clause in your mother's will; but, for my own part, I think it was very unwisely insert-

ed. I have always avoided speaking on the subject, not only because I thought you too young to reflect seriously on so important an affair as religion, but because I mortally hate discussions of all sorts."

"As to your being too young," replied the baroness, "I must, in this particular, beg leave to differ in opinion from the countess; I consider religion of such high import, that it cannot be implanted or reflected upon too early, or too often; it gives me heartfelt satisfaction to know you are a Protestant from conviction; but believe me, dearest Ada, I would never have sought to influence your opinions, because I am persuaded, if we are observant of our duties in this life, we shall never be asked hereafter, to what sect we belonged, or under what Christian denomination we performed them. But, in your present visit to Doneraile Castle, my love, you will not be annoyed by Mr. Burke—he is no longer the earl's confessor."

"I am not sorry," said Ada, "that he is gone, for he used to look at me in a way that terrified me."

"Your cousin Alfred is expected home,"

resumed the baroness; "he is at present in England; but wanting only a few weeks of being of age, he will return to Doneraile Castle, where entertainments of more than usual magnificence will be given on the occasion."

"I hope lord Conway's temper is amended," said Ada, "or I shall find my six months residence with his parents more irksome than ever, for he used to be the torment of my life."

"But three years absence," replied lady Wandesford, "with a tutor so gentlemanly in manners as Mr. Annesley, together with the society he must have mingled with abroad, will no doubt have effected a great improvement; the rude over-indulged boy will be modelled into a polite agreeable young man; recollect, my love, your cousin Alfred was little more than seventeen when he left Ireland, and considered you a mere child."

"I perfectly recollect," said Miss Lambart, "that he was violent in his temper, rude and overbearing in his manners, and so selfish, that he considered no one's pleasure or convenience but his own, and

cared not who he insulted, or made suffer; and that it was this intemperate disposition that constrained the earl to send him abroad, in spite of the 'opposition' of the countess."

"I am extremely sorry," returned the baroness, "to perceive that the impression made on your memory by your cousin, is so little in his favour; but travel, with the example and advice of his worthy tutor, may, and I hope have, effected as great an improvement in his mind and disposition, as time has in his person, which the countess of Vandeleur tells me, in her last letter, is wonderful, if the account rendered her by the honourable Mrs. Chatterton, who met him frequently at Milan last year, is to be credited."

"For his own sake, and that of his parents," said Miss Lambart, "I hope his temper is improved."

"And for your sake also, my Ada," returned the baroness.

"I put myself entirely out of the question," returned Miss Lambart, "for however bad his temper may be, it can only affect me at intervals, and that only for a

stated time ; but by the earl and countess of Vandeleur, and those who are to spend their lives with him, his entire reformation is ‘ *devoutly to be wished.*’

“ It is indeed,” said lady Wandesford, stifling a sigh ; “ I trust lord Conway will be found in every point an ornament to his exalted rank, and deserving the high fortune his parents design him.”

The entrance of Janet, Miss Lambart’s maid, to inform her that a box had just arrived from Dublin, put an end to lady Wandesford’s good wishes for lord Conway.

“ My new dresses, I suppose,” said Miss Lambart ; “ I declare I shall regret my simple unadorned muslin frocks, which, if left to my own choice, I should greatly prefer to all the decorations and inventions of fashion.”

“ It is the countess of Vandeleur’s wish that you should make a splendid appearance on your birthday,” replied the baroness ; “ and as your trunks are to go to-morrow, by a conveyance she has appointed to call for them, the sooner Janet begins packing them the better.”

Ada, on giving a small casket that lay beside her into Janet's hand, observed that her pearl necklace wanted a new clasp.

"I believe I have one that will exactly suit it," said lady Wandesford; "let Janet follow me to my dressing-room, and I will send it with the chain your unknown friend presented you, when you were too young to appreciate the value of the gift, or decline its acceptance."

"I do not think I shall wear it," returned Ada; "I am too young for such splendid ornaments."

"Depend upon it, the countess of Vandeleur will not think so," said lady Wandesford; "but be this as it may, it will be proper to take it with you."

Miss Lambart, on reaching her dressing-room, sat musing on the mysterious giver of that magnificent chain, which had been valued at eleven thousand pounds, whom it was most probable was dead, as he never had been heard of, from the day he had placed it on her infant neck.

Janet entering with a curiously inlaid ivory box, turned the current of her thoughts to the jewels that met her eyes

—“ This is a mistake, Janet,” said Ada; “ this box does not belong to me; my chain,” she was going to say, “ is not here.” But on taking up a superb diamond necklace, she perceived the miniature of a gentleman, richly encircled with brilliants, at the back of which were the initials G. F. on a plait of dark hair.—“ What a handsome countenance! what expressive eyes! what a noble forehead!” exclaimed Ada, her eyes rivetted on the picture, “ and the lips, how beautifully curved!”

Janet was the foster-sister of Miss Lambart, and taking the liberty of an indulged favourite, peeped over the shoulder of her young lady, and, unable to contain her admiration, expressed her astonishment with—“ Well, to be sure, I never saw such a likeness in all my life.”

“ Of whom, Janet?” asked Miss Lambart: “ I do not remember I ever saw any person it resembles.”

“ Do pray look in the glass, dear Miss Lambart,” said Janet, “ and you will see it is the very image of yourself; the same shaped eye, the same coloured hair, and the exact smile about the mouth; the

complexion, to be sure, is a good deal darker than yours, but nothing can be more like than the features."

Ada could not be blind to the resemblance so truly pointed out by Janet; and while she gazed on the miniature, she felt a tender and melting sensation at her heart, that filled her eyes with tears.—"If I had not so often seen the portrait of lord Lambart at Doneraile Castle," said Ada, "I should fancy this the resemblance of my father."

"I am sure it is some very near relation," returned Janet.

"It may, and most likely is, some relation," resumed Miss Lambart; "would that I knew him!" continued she, pressing the miniature to her lips; "how I should love the original!"

At this moment lady Wandesford entered the dressing-room, with a smaller box in her hand—"I have made a mistake, Ada," said she; "in this box you will find your chain, and——"

"Whose portrait is this, dear aunt?" asked Ada, much more interested in the picture she held in her hand, than in her

own jewels; "what a speaking countenance is here! what heavenly eyes! they look so tenderly upon me, that they make me weep," and a shower of tears fell on the interesting miniature.

Lady Wandesford's face was pale, and her hands trembled as she returned the picture to its case in the ivory box, which she closed with a deep sigh.—"The original of that picture, my love," replied she, "was a near relation of yours; but unhappily he ~~was~~ lost to us before you were born."

"I am very, very sorry to hear he is dead," said Miss Lambart; "I am certain I never saw so handsome a man, and I think it very improbable that I ever shall."

"He was indeed uncommonly handsome," returned the baroness, "and extremely unfortunate; but pray, my dear child, ask me no questions relative to his history, for it is a subject I cannot bear to speak upon."

Thus prohibited, respect for her aunt silenced the inquiries Ada longed to make; and lady Wandesford having wiped away the tears that were straying down her

cheek, said, in a faltering voice—"Let Janet fasten this emerald clasp to your necklace—it belonged to your mother."

"And on that account will be most valuable to me," replied Miss Lambart.

The baroness pressed her lips on the white forehead of her niece, and taking with her the ivory box, left the dressing-room, with a look of such discomposure, as convinced Ada that the mysterious miniature had awakened remembrances in her mind of a painful nature.

"I would lay all the money I am worth," said Janet, "that beautiful picture was the resemblance of some lover of lady Wandesford's; for did you notice, Miss Lambart, how pale her lips went, and how she shook and quivered, when she saw it in your hand?"

"It is not likely," replied Miss Lambart, "that the baroness would keep the likeness of a former lover after she was married; and lord Wandesford died when she was too far advanced in life to think of a second engagement."

"But did you never hear, Miss Lambart, that lady Wandesford married the

the baron, who was many years older than herself, against her inclinations, and that
———”

“ No more of this, Janet,” interrupted Miss Lambart, gravely ; “ it is unbecoming of you, and improper in me, to listen to any idle tales you may have picked up respecting the family affairs of lady Wandesford, who has maintained, during her whole life, a character of excellence, which it should be our pride to imitate.”

“ Dear me now, I am sure, Miss Lambart,” returned Janet, bursting into tears, “ I did not mean any harm, indeed I did not : I know that the baroness is the very best of ladies, and I would not say a word to offend her, or you, for the universal world.”

“ If I did not believe you to be a good-hearted girl, Janet,” said Miss Lambart. “ I would not keep you about my person. I do not doubt your affection for me, or respect for lady Wandesford ; but let me warn you not to believe every story you hear, for when a tale is repeated, there is so much of invention mingled with it, that it is very difficult to separate the truth

from the falsehood. Come, come, dry up your tears, Janet; I am not offended with you; and if I have spoken more seriously than usual, it is because I am anxious for your good, and desirous that my foster-sister should respect herself, and be above the tittle-tattle of a lady's maid."

Janet kissed the white hand of Ada, and sobbing, promised to offend no more.

Leaving Janet to recover herself, and pack up for their removal to Doneraile Castle, Ada descended to the terrace, where

on each side the broad gravel walk, between bay and laurel-trees, were placed statues of heathen gods and goddesses, rudely sculptured, and of hideous aspect; and stone vases, bearing rose, althea-frutex, and oleander trees. It was now April, and as she stepped to pluck some new-blown violets, she gazed on the statues with a sigh, and thought she could prefer passing the summer with them, grim-visaged and time-worn as they were, to all the modern elegance and luxuries that would surround her at Doneraile Castle; for along that terrace she had bounded, gay,

unrestrained, and happy, in the thoughtless days of childhood—on that terrace she had received instruction, mingled with caresses, from the lips of her aunt, the baroness Wandesford, from whose example and precepts her mind was enlarged, and strengthened in piety and virtue; by whom she had been taught the value of time, and that regular hours were conducive to health.

Ada also thought of the different society she should mingle with, when she left Lisburn Abbey: lady Wandesford's visitors were few and select, persons who could partake pleasure soberly, without making it the business of their lives—"And I am going," said Ada, "to pass six long months with the countess Vandeleur, my aunt also; but, alas! she has no affection for me—she has no feelings but what are excited by pride and ostentatious display; her greatest pleasure is to be the leader of fashions, no matter how absurd, to possess useless and expensive articles of *vertu*, and to be the centre of a crowd of beings frivolous and cold-hearted as herself: and for the society of persons I can

neither esteem or admire, I must leave you, my innocent companions," continued she, weeping, as she approached an aviary, that contained some rare and beautiful birds, which being daily fed from the hand of Ada, now came close to the wire fence that confined them, in expectation of grain, bread, or fruit; an indefinable sorrow oppressed her heart, as she smoothed the glossy feathers of a dove, that flew from its nest to receive her caresses; she felt as if she was never to return to her downy favourites, never again to wander amid the groves most dear to her, from having passed under the shade of their venerable trees, years unknown to care, where tenderness and indulgence had reared her youth, and no wish had remained ungratified, that reason could ask, or propriety grant.

Leaving the aviary, Ada pensively crossed a Chinese bridge, and descending a green slope, entered a garden that was called hers; it was a spot kept by the gardener in the nicest order, and being open to the sun, displayed a gay profusion of

spring flowers, already putting forth their bright and fragrant blossoms beneath the warm rays, that seemed enamoured of their sweetness and beauty.—“ I shall be far away,” said Ada, “ when these later flowers display their beautiful tints, and breathe fragrance; when I return, the blooms of summer will be gone—I shall behold only the ‘ *sear and yellow leaf*.’”

Full of melancholy reflections, she seated herself on a garden-chair, and taking out her tablets, gave her thoughts form, in the following lines :—

“ When the summer is bright, and the rose rich in bloom,
My thoughts will be sad, and my spirit all gloom,
For I quit the sweet bowers where simplicity dwells,
For the halls where gay pleasure has scatter'd her spells.

“ Cold hearts will be round me, and eyes that will shine,
But, alas! with no beam that sheds gladness on mine ;
And lips there will smile, and hands will extend,
And many profess themselves warmly my friend.

“ But artful and hollow the world has oft prov'd,
To the guileless and young, who have trusted and lov'd ;
And hearts have been broken—the lovely and brave,
In frenzied delirium have sunk to the grave.

“ Oh! shield me, bright Virtue, and still on my breast
Be the seal of thy purity firmly impress'd ;
Oh! let me return to the haunts of my youth,
Unchang'd in my feelings, unalter'd in truth.”

A sun-dial, against which she had leaned

while she wrote, now warned Ada that she must haste to dress for dinner, to which the baroness had invited a party, to bid her farewell, previous to her departure to D'онераile Castle.

When Ada descended to the state-saloon, she was introduced to sir Henry Ogle, who having only the day before arrived from a tour on the Continent, came an unexpected guest, with his mother and sister. Sir Henry was "*point device in his accoutrements*," and believed himself irresistible in dress, and fascinating in manner. With this favourable opinion of himself, sir Henry had no doubt of Miss Lambart's heart being at once captivated with his *agremens*, between whom and his sister he placed himself at dinner. Sir Henry Ogle had travelled, for the sake of saying he had seen St. Peter's, the Coliseum, the Vatican, and the Campidoglio, at Rome; the Cathedral, the Medicean Chapel, and the Palazzo Vechio, at Florence; that he had visited the Castello di Porta Zobia, and the subterranean chapel that contains the superb tomb of St. Charles Borromeo, at Milan. Sir Henry Ogle had never been

remarkable for taste or genius : he took a tour on the Continent, because it was fashionable for young men of rank to travel ; and he returned as young men of rank too frequently do, a complete coxcomb, neither improved in understanding nor morals ; but though sir Henry's conversation was *sans esprit*, he was, like most silly persons, fond of hearing himself talk ; and with the hope of ingratiating himself with Miss Lambart, he spoke of lord Conway in a way he thought extremely complimentary to his absent friend, as he called him, but which gave the sensible and discriminating Ada, an unpleasant suspicion that her expected relation would return improved only in folly and vice. Sir Henry Ogle pronounced lord Conway's costume and *manière recherché*, and his *succes avec des dames*, most decided—"There was the marquise St. Roseville, and madame the comtesse Lafonte," said sir Henry, "so jealous of his attentions, that his lordship was apprehensive they would poison each other, and mademoiselle Laurent, who offered to elope from her."

Miss Lambart rejoiced that she was

spared any farther account of lord Conway's *affaires de cœur*, by sir Henry's being asked some questions relative to the Pantheon at Rome, which for that time banished all remembrance of his friend's embarrassments *d'amour*; and when they retired to the state-saloon, she took care to place herself in a situation where he could not approach near enough to her to renew his unpleasant conversation; though Miss Ogle, unwilling to relinquish the opportunity of repeating all she had heard from her brother respecting lord Conway, observed, it was reported at Paris, that the earl and countess of Vandeleur had commanded his lordship home, to secure the hand of some heiress they wished him to marry, which project he had openly declared he should disappoint, being determined not to be governed by the will of his parents in the choice of a wife. This day was passed by Miss Lambart very unpleasantly; her spirits had been depressed in the morning, and what she now heard of her cousin's conduct and intentions, did not contribute to raise them.

Lord Ponsonby, an old bachelor parti-

cularly fond of music, proposed to Ada to try a new Irish melody on her harp; hoping to get rid of her own uneasy thoughts, and ever ready to oblige, she suffered her harp to be placed before her; but having so promptly obliged lord Ponsonby, sir Henry, who was extravagant in his praise of her performance, entreated to be favoured with a song—a request she felt inclined to refuse; but lady Ogle pressed her so earnestly to sing, that to avoid the appearance of affectation, she gave, with great simplicity and feeling, the following ballad:—

“ Fair Ellen left her father’s cot
For pillar’d halls and state,
But cheerless was her splendid lot,
And sad her hapless fate.

“ In silken robes her form was dress’d,
Bright jewels bound her hair;
But sorrow rankled in her breast,
Her days were days of care.

“ Much happier she in russet clad,
Her hair with lilies bound,
For then each rising morn was glad—
Sweet peace her slumbers crown’d.

“ Fair Ellen found her halls of state
Were fill’d with deadly foes;
That falsehood revell’d with the great,
To poison their repose.

“ And all too late, the world she prov’d
Was but a dream of joy,
Where all she valued, trusted, lov’d,
Had smil’d but to destroy.”

“ Thank you, my dear Miss Lambart,” said lord Ponsonby, “ your song is very charming.”

“ Delightful, exquisite, *brillante!*” exclaimed sir Henry, who having no taste for music, was the more profuse in expressing the rapture that he did not feel.

“ Very delightful indeed,” said lady Ogle, “ but extremely melancholy.”

“ It is enough to make one think the world full of snares and deceit,” observed Miss Ogle.

“ Few persons, I believe, enter the world with such frightful impressions,” replied Miss Macartney; “ for my part, I was very gay at Dublin last winter, and am quite certain my morals were not corrupted, nor my peace destroyed, though I was introduced at the Castle, and danced at several balls, was present at many concerts, and attended the theatre, whenever a great actress or actor performed; and in the midst of these pleasures, I met no

false friends, fell into no snares, neither did I meet with any deceit to destroy my peace by day, or disturb my sleep at night."

"You have been particularly fortunate," rejoined her guardian, lord Ponsonby; "but, my dear Emily, are you quite certain that you fell into the sober hours and customs of Ponsonby House, with the same ease and content as if you had never left them for the gaieties of Dublin, and that you did not regret the balls, concerts, and plays, you could no longer enjoy?"

"Why, to confess the truth," replied Miss Macartney, "I was sorry, only a little sorry, to quit the pleasures my Dublin friends procured me; but indeed, my lord, I was extremely happy to see you and dear lady Charleville; and though I did feel dining at three o'clock, and going to bed at eleven, a little odd at first, yet I contented myself with reflecting, that it was my duty to be satisfied with the regulations and appointments of persons so much wiser and experienced than myself; and I assure you, my dear guardian, I have no wish to alter them in any particular."

“How good and amiable!” said lady Ogle, remembering Miss Macartney’s large fortune, and expectations from lord Ponsonby, and his sister, lady Charleville, and wishing to recommend her to sir Henry, whose estates were barely sufficient to support his rank.

“Why, I must do my little ward the justice to say, she is very conformable to the whims of her old bachelor guardian,” returned lord Ponsonby, “and that she has never yet given me reason to complain of her temper, or doubt the goodness of her heart.”

Lady Ogle was on the point of saying, Miss Macartney would be a most desirable wife, but recollecting lord Ponsonby had that same evening expressed his detestation of matchmakers, she prudently forbore saying any thing farther in praise of Miss Macartney, whose good qualities, and thirty thousand pounds fortune, with other great expectations, she determined to point out to her son the first convenient opportunity. But sir Henry Ogle had already, in his own mind, selected his lady love, and most unfortunately for himself.

Deceived by the natural affability and politeness of Miss Lambart, whom his conversation had wearied, and his conceit disgusted, he fancied her captivated with the graces of his person, believed that he had made a grand impression on her heart, and that there would be no sort of difficulty in persuading her to bestow her fair hand upon him, and make him master of her fortune, which was known to be immense.

The countess of Vandeleur's friends were all persons of the highest bon-ton—not perhaps distinguished so much for their virtues, as their expensive establishments, their patrician blood, and contempt of every thing plebeian. To gain an introduction to the countess appeared to sir Henry Ogle the first step towards the accomplishment of his matrimonial scheme, and he was turning the matter over in his mind, when his mother and sister rose to take their leave. Lady Ogle wished Miss Lambart much pleasure at Doneraile Castle, and hoped to see her in perfect health on her return.

The ladies having passed on, sir Henry lingered behind, to say, he hoped, when

lord Conway arrived, to obtain the honour of an introduction to the countess of Vandeleur, when he should again have the extreme happiness of paying his devoirs at the shrine of her beauty.

Miss Lambart blushed, and felt displeased; but supposing this was the usage of the world, merely the language of compliment, she made no reply, not even an inclination of her body; and sir Henry, his vanity not a little mortified, repeated his farewell, without obtaining from the fair inflexible so much as, "I shall be glad to see you at Doneraile Castle."

Lady Wandesford's company all departed at an early hour; and when Janet attended to undress her young lady, she fancied she looked pale and serious; but having received a lesson in the morning, she was afraid to appear to notice her dejection, or to make inquiries, for fear of getting another reprimand for being curious, and wishing to pry into secrets.

Ada's heart was indeed sorrowful, for she was about to quit her beloved and revered aunt, and friends really attached to her, for beings heartless, cold, and selfish

and it was not the least of her concern, that she was to meet her cousin Alfred, who had never treated her with the kindness of a relation, but had always, as far as he dared, been a perfect tyrant to her, terrifying her with his violence, and delighting to torment her.

Ada's sleep on this night was restless and unrefreshing, and she awoke to renew her regret at leaving the protection of lady Wandesford, as she heard her trunks removing from the dressing-room. Unable to compose herself to sleep again, she arose, and on descending to the breakfast-parlour, in search of a book she had left there the preceding day, she had a note delivered to her, emblazoned with the Vandeleur arms; its contents were an intimation—"That instead of troubling the baroness Wandesford to send her chariot, as usual, with Miss Lambart, to Doneraile Castle, the countess of Vandeleur had accepted the offer of her friend, the honourable Mrs. Chatterton, to give her a seat in her carriage, that lady and her niece, Miss Obrien, having promised to oblige the countess of Vandeleur with their company

at Doneraile Castle for a month. This arrangement the countess hoped would meet the approbation of the baroness Wandesford and Miss Lambart. The countess of Vandeleur also requested Miss Lambart to take the trouble of expressing to the baroness Wandesford, her own and the earl of Vandeleur's extreme regret, that other engagements prevented her from accompanying Miss Lambart to Doneraile Castle."

Ada knew that the honourable Mrs. Chatterton was a particular favourite with the countess, and that she should be equally safe in her protection, as if she went in lady Wandesford's carriage, under the care of her servants; therefore she was perfectly satisfied with the arrangement; but it was evident, when she presented the note to the baroness at breakfast, that a shade of displeasure passed over the venerable lady's countenance at the name of the honourable Mrs. Chatterton; and that the smile with which she read the countess of Vandeleur's concern, at her having declined visiting Doneraile Castle, expressed a conviction of the writer's insincerity; but not choosing to impress Ada with her

own unfavourable ideas of the countess and her friends, she merely said—"The countess of Vandeleur is very considerate in providing you with agreeable travelling companions, and in sparing my horses and servants."

"I have but very little recollection of the honourable Mrs. Chatterton," replied Ada; "but I am glad to hear you say she is agreeable; her niece, Miss O'Brien, I think sir Henry Ogle described as very handsome, but extremely affected."

"I do not rely implicitly on the judgment of sir Henry Ogle," said lady Wandesford; "his portraits, in my opinion, are all too highly coloured to be natural. The world, my dear Ada, is too apt to be influenced and governed by the opinions and prejudices of others; but you, my child, are capable of judging for yourself; and as you are now about to enter into that world, from the deceits and illusions of which your youth has hitherto happily exempted you, let me warn you not to let your heart be influenced through the medium of your eyes; let me caution you against being prejudiced in favour of a

handsome exterior; for it frequently happens, that the most homely persons are endowed with virtues and talents, that render them truly estimable, and worthy of our friendship and confidence."

"For instance, lady Jane Longfield," replied Ada; "her features are very plain, but her disposition is truly amiable, and she is sensible and highly accomplished."

It was against the other sex, to whom her wealth would render her an object of great interest, the baroness more particularly wished to guard her niece, because, on the prudent disposal of her affections, she knew the happiness of her life must depend; but her delicacy would not permit her to speak of love, or the designs of artful and unprincipled men, to one who was in years little more than a child; but, aware of the danger to which her inexperienced mind would be exposed at Done-raile Castle, where the titled libertine and needy man of fashion were distinguished guests, and where the worst principles were concealed, under polished manners and brilliant attainments, she considered it a duty incumbent upon her, to counsel

Ada against being deluded into a belief of excellence from a dazzling exterior, without searching beneath the surface.

“ There are persons, my dear Ada,” resumed the baroness, “ who have an imposing manner, and a plausible fluency of speech, by aid of which they contrive to throw a brilliant veil over their faults and vices ; but beware, my Ada, of these sentimentalists ; they are much more dangerous than an open profligate, for they hide, in the flowery mazes of sophistry and affected goodness, the worst principles and the most corrupt hearts.”

“ Heaven protect me from such characters !” said Ada.

“ Amen,” responded the baroness, fervently. “ Heaven, my dear child, will, I trust, protect you from being injured by them ; but, in your journey through life, you will assuredly meet such characters as these.”

“ But not, I hope, at Doneraile Castle,” said Ada.

“ I hope so too,” resumed the baroness ; “ but be upon your guard, my Ada ; for let the countess of Vandeleur be ever so

circumspect in the selection of her guests, there will be some among them whose characters are not exactly correct. I do not fear the frivolous or licentious, because I know the purity of your mind, and am convinced they would excite only your abhorrence and contempt; it is the specious and hypocritical, of whose arts I am apprehensive; for these, though they may fail to shake the integrity of your principles, or deprive your mind of its innocence, may deeply wound your heart, and tinge all your future years with sorrow."

"I shall now," replied Miss Lambart, "go with more reluctance than ever to Doneraile Castle."

"It afflicts me to hear that avowal," said lady Wandesford, "for you will doubtless meet many amiable persons among your aunt's guests. Heaven, in its mercy, forbid that all mankind should be alike vicious and unworthy! Do not, my Ada, let my admonitions render you suspicious and cold-hearted, but let it teach you not to form hasty friendships, or to lavish your esteem on the undeserving."

The housekeeper coming in for orders,

Ada was left to her own reflections, which were not of the most pleasant nature ; and regret that she could not always continue a child, safe from the vices and stratagems of the world, stole over her artless mind.

“ The baroness Wandesford was the sister of the earl of Donegal, the father of lady Amanda Fitzgerald ; the countess of Vandeleur was the sister of the earl’s second wife, and being many years younger than the baroness, and of a very volatile disposition, they had never been very warm friends. Their disparity of years, the countess of Vandeleur offered to her friends as the reason why they were not seen together, as often as might have been expected, from the nearness of the family connection ; but the fact was, their tempers and pursuits did not assimilate, and their religious faith was different, sufficient reasons to prevent intimacy ; and nothing could have been more disagreeable and mortifying to the countess of Vandeleur, than finding the formal old heretic baroness Wandesford, appointed with herself to the guardianship of lady Amanda Fitzgerald’s infant daughter, particularly as the will of

the mother gave the child uncontrollable liberty to decide for herself, on that point which would have given her a preponderating ascendancy over her mind and actions; and it was an additional cause for dislike of the baroness Wandesford, when Miss Lambart, on her thirteenth birthday, declared herself a Protestant from conviction, and refused to attend mass with the earl's family; since which period, the visits between the countess of Vandeleur and the baroness Wandesford had been "*few and far between*," though, on account of Ada, their joint ward, a complimentary correspondence had been kept up, cold and ceremonious on both sides.

But while Miss Lambart's wishes remained at Lisburn Abbey, and her heart preferred the company of her beloved and venerable aunt to all the gaiety and splendour that awaited her at Doneraile Castle, Janet was almost wild with joy, to think she was so soon to quit the gloomy apartments and sober orderly gray-headed servants of lady Wandesford, for smart ladies' maids, almost as well dressed as their mistress, and gay valets, as much gentlemen

as their masters, and to the full as well-looking; and besides, she should see her mother, and her uncle, and cousins, and shew her fine clothes, and be the envy of her former companions in her native village. While Miss Lambart dreaded the arrival of the honourable Mrs. Chatterton, Janet anxiously counted the hours, leaned from the windows, and impatiently listened for the sound of her carriage-wheels. At length it was seen in the chesnut avenue that led to the grand entrance, a wide stone portico thickly mantled with ivy.

Ada threw herself, weeping, into the arms of her not less affected aunt, who, restraining her own tears, entreated she would compose her agitated spirits, and not allow Mrs. Chatterton to suppose she returned unwillingly to the guardianship of the earl and countess of Vandeleur.

“Oh that the next six months were past,” said Ada, endeavouring to dry the tears that continued to gush from her eyes, “and that I was returning to you, and dear Lisburn Abbey!”

“I trust we shall meet again sooner than you expect, my beloved Ada,” re-

plied the baroness, "for if the countess takes you to Dublin, as I have some reason to believe she will, I shall pay sir Horace M'Carthy a visit, for the express purpose of seeing and being near you."

Comforted with this hope, Ada became less agitated; and again embracing lady Wandesford, who tenderly and solemnly bestowed her blessing upon her, she ascended the carriage of the honourable Miss Chatterton, who declined lady Wandesford's invitation to alight and take refreshment, on the plea of there being no moon, and the roads so insufferably bad, that if her postillions did not put the horses on their best mettle, they should not reach their resting-place before dark; for this there was time sufficient, but the honourable Mrs. Chatterton made no scruple of telling a white lie, whenever it suited her purpose; for it had been previously agreed between her niece, Miss Obrien, and herself, not to alight at Lisburn Abbey, where they should be ennuied with the tirade of the saintly lady Wandesford, who, shunning and shunned by *le beau monde*, they set down as a disa-

greeable preaching old woman, whose conversation, Miss Obrien declared, would sink her spirits into so lamentable a state of depression, that it would take an ocean of eau de Cologne and sal volatile, to raise them again to tolerable cheerfulness.

Miss Lambart found the honourable Mrs. Chatterton a much more agreeable companion than her niece, who having bowed to her when she entered the carriage, took little share in the conversation that passed, but amused herself with caressing a small Spanish dog, that lay cushioned on her muff, and appeared to be considered by her as the only object worthy her attention.

When they arrived at the inn where they were to remain that night, Miss Obrien, having thrown off her various envelopes, and sank into an elbow chair, convinced Ada that sir Henry Ogle had not exaggerated in his report of her beauty, or her affectation. When dinner was placed on the table, she protested the very idea of meat, dressed in the *cuisine* of an inn, took away her appetite; and how was it possible to eat without silver forks?

Yet with all this delicacy, Miss O'Brien partook of every dish that came to table, and that not sparingly, though she declared the viands were bad, and the cooking worse; the wine she pronounced horrid stuff, so very bad that she should not wonder if it poisoned her.

The honourable Mrs. Chatterton listened to these idle complaints with perfect *nonchalance*, till perceiving Miss Lambart look astonished, she said, with a forced laugh—"She always made it a rule to be content with whatever was placed before her at an inn; but I advise you, Charlotte," continued she, addressing Miss O'Brien, "always when you travel, to load a couple of mules with provisions and wine, that you may be accommodated to your taste."

"Really it would be a most excellent plan for me," replied Miss O'Brien, "who have so delicate a stomach.—Connel," said she to the footman that stood at the back of her chair, biting his lips to prevent himself from laughing, "take care of Don Carlos," meaning her Spanish dog;

“ see that he has the breast and wing of a chicken—poor sweet little fellow, he is almost starved ; and give him half a glass of sherry, to make him sleep after the fatigue of his journey : and do you hear, Connel,” calling the man back, who was hurrying out of the room, “ be sure you cut the meat upon a clean plate for him, and into small pieces, for I would not have the sweet creature choked for the world : and mind, Connel, be sure do not give him the bones to injure his teeth, or suffer him to grease his paws ; and be sure hold up his ears, that he may not wipe the plate with them :” after all these injunctions, the man was suffered to depart.

“ When you are married, and have children, Charlotte, you will be a most careful and tender mother,” observed Mrs. Chatterton ; “ the anxiety you express for the comfort of your dog, is a convincing proof of the solicitude you will feel for them.”

“ Me have children !” exclaimed Miss Obrien ; “ the very idea is horrible ; I hope I may never be fated to undergo the misery of being plagued with the noise of

squalling brats; but if I am to be punished with having children, I shall take care to be provided with proper attendants, who will keep from my sight, and from my ears, all such annoying and odious objects; I declare, the bare possibility of having such torments, if it was properly reflected upon, would be sufficient to keep a delicate female from entering into the married state."

"Well, we shall see," returned Mrs. Chatterton, "whether the horror of being made a mamma, will induce you to refuse a certain gentleman, when he solicits the gift of your fair hand."

"Nonsense!" said Miss O'Brien, blushing, not with the modest apprehension of being asked to become a bride, but with the consciousness of having concealed from her aunt circumstances relative to that certain gentleman, which, when disclosed, she was sure would create much disturbance, if not an absolute quarrel, between them. "My dear Mrs. Chatterton," said she, for aunt and niece had, by mutual agreement, been laid aside by these high-

bred ladies, "you are really such a well-known rattle, that it is quite unnecessary for me to deny the knowledge of any certain gentleman likely to propose to me. If I could have resolved to remain at Milan, the marchese Montalto—poor fellow, he was in agonies when I bade him farewell. I am sure I felt very sorry to inflict pain; but what could I do? he was attached to Italy, and I could not relinquish Ireland, or else really he was tolerably handsome, not exactly a fool, and, with proper management, might have made a passable sort of husband; but," yawning affectedly, "this is a very stupid kind of subject; and I hope, ladies," yawning again, "you will have the goodness to excuse me, for I am really quite fatigued and sleepy, and must beg permission to leave you to entertain each other." Having summoned her maid, Miss O'Brien wished them a pleasant evening, and retired.

Miss Lambart would have been glad to follow her example, for though she was neither sleepy nor tired, she would have been pleased to retire to the indulgence of her own thoughts, to reflect on the coun-

sels of her revered aunt, and to prepare her mind for meeting the countess of Vandeleur, with whom she had a presentiment she should pass the ensuing six months very unpleasantly : but the honourable Mrs. Chatterton evinced no intention of retiring ; on the contrary, she ordered the fire to be replenished, and bade her footman inquire if the house afforded a pack of cards, or backgammon-table ? Not being able to procure either, the honourable Mrs. Chatterton shrugged her shoulders, wondered that innkeepers did not provide for the amusement of their guests—" But *n'importe*, we must entertain ourselves, in the best way we can." She then began to speak of Paris, which she preferred before any other place she had visited on the Continent ; she described the Louvre, Tuilleries, Palais Royal, and the Luxemburg, as containing all that was superb and magnificent in architecture, sculpture, or painting.—" In short, there is no place in the world," said Mrs. Chatterton, " that can compare with dear delightful Paris, where there is such a succession of amusements—I was perpetually engaged at en-

chanting *soirees*, delightful *petit soupers*, magnificent balls, and splendid masquerades, at the hotels of the noblesse. Well, of all people under the sun, the French, in my opinion, are the most enlightened and polite. If affairs of consequence had not recalled me to Ireland, I should have been happy to have remained at Paris all my life." Mrs. Chatterton next spoke of the opera and the theatres, to which she gave a decided preference over any other, declaring that the French singers and actors not only delighted the ear, but ravished the heart.—"Yes, yes," said she, "France is truly the land of enchantment."

The honourable Mrs. Chatterton having exhausted her raptures, ordered tea.—"You, my dear Miss Lambart, are accustomed to take tea; in France it is very seldom introduced; and really I think it very bad for the nerves; strong green tea always makes me low spirited; while coffee exhilarates and acts upon my system like a cordial."

Miss Lambart expected when the tea equipage was removed that she should be permitted to retire; but the honourable

Mrs. Chatterton, who seemed never weary of hearing herself speak, commenced a new subject—the beauty, graces, and accomplishments of Miss Obrien, who had been courted, followed, and admired by princes, marquisses, and barons, while abroad.—“She refused the marchese Montalto,” said Mrs. Chatterton, “though his superb palazzo at Milan, and his beautiful villa on the banks of the Oglio, were sufficient to make her forget that he was thirty years older than herself, at least I should have thought so; but I suspect, though she denies it, that her refusal of a foreign title was influenced by a little lurking preference in the corner of her heart, for the certain gentleman to whom I alluded at dinner; and most certainly, if appearances are to be trusted, the young man is desperately in love; if absence does not cool his flame, he will not be long before he declares himself; and we shall see whether a handsome young man, with a coronet in reversion, has not rhetoric sufficient to overcome Miss Obrien’s dislike of those matrimonial plagues, squalling children.”

The honourable Mrs. Chatterton con-

tinued talking, and Miss Lambart endeavoured to listen, till the midnight hour struck, when, in spite of all her efforts, her eyelids became heavy, and her weariness too obvious to escape the notice of the loquacious Mrs. Chatterton, who continued to apologize for not having recollected the very early hours observed by lady Wandesford at Lisburn Abbey, till another half-hour had elapsed, and she found that Miss Lambart was too sleepy to attend to what she was saying; she then rang for bed-chamber lights, protesting she had not retired to rest at so sober an hour she knew not when.

Ada was most happy to bid the honourable Mrs. Chatterton good-night, and to be permitted to follow Janet to the apartment allotted for her repose.

Janet, rubbing her eyes, declared it was almost morning, and she was very sleepy; but Mrs. Sprucely, the honourable Mrs. Chatterton's woman, had told her, that she never thought about getting to bed before three in the morning, and was often up till four.—“ But then,” added Janet, “ she never gets up before ten. Bless me,

what hours ! Why it is turning day into night, and night into day. But I find it is the way with all the great folks, that call themselves fashionable ; it seems very odd to me, just like turning the world upside down ; but I suppose I shall get used to it in time, and be able to keep my eyes open like other people."

" You will never get used to it while you remain with me, Janet," replied Miss Lambart, " for I will never sacrifice my own health, or yours, to such hours ; I trust I shall be able to live in the world, without becoming a slave to its follies and absurdities." Having prayed to be governed and directed, Ada dismissed Janet, and again recommending herself to the protection of her Heavenly Father, she resigned herself to sleep.

In the morning, Miss O'Brien did not appear at breakfast ; her French maid said—" Her lady was indispose ver much—she requis de cupe of chocolate up stair—she no able possible to move widout take someting *déjeuné*."

The honourable Mrs. Chatterton smiled,

and observed, that Miss Obrien loved to indulge in a morning.—“ But you will be good enough to inform her, Mrs. Millefleur, that I shall not wait a moment for her; I have ordered the carriage at ten, and if she is not ready, I shall set off without her.”

Mrs. Millefleur having departed with the chocolate, Mrs. Chatterton remarked that Miss Lambart looked pale, and hoped that sitting up beyond her usual hour had not made her ill.

Miss Lambart complained of a slight headach, for the relief of which, Mrs. Chatterton prescribed bathing her temples with Hungary water; “ I have some of the genuine sort,” continued she, “ presented me by the princess Loweniski, the most delightful woman in the world, who brought it herself from Czerwaniza, together with some beautiful opals, and such delicious Tockay; I am extremely sorry I was obliged to return to Ireland without travelling through Hungary, Poland, and Silesia; I could have made up a delightful party, which would have been much more pleasant than——But I beg ten thousand

pardons, Miss Lambart ;” she then rang the bell, and ordered her woman, Mrs. Spruce-ly, to bring a silver-cased bottle from her dressing-box ; “ this,” said she, presenting the bottle for Ada to bathe her temples, “ this is a sovereign remedy for the head-ach ; but after all, Miss Lambart, if you do suffer a little pain, you owe me some obligation for keeping you up last night.”

Ada smiled.

“ For all that incredulous smile, Miss Lambart,” continued the honourable Mrs. Chatterton, “ I persist in my assertion, for it is certainly better you should endure *malade de tête* now, than after making your *debut* at Doneraile Castle ; for I am certain the countess Vandeleur will not dispense with your company at her projected entertainment.”

Miss Lambart replied, it was her hope to be permitted to keep the same hours as on her former visits at the castle.

“ My sweet young friend,” returned the honourable Mrs. Chatterton, “ you are not yet acquainted with your wishes ; you know not your own hopes ; you do not suspect the entire revolution your taste

and sentiments will undergo, when initiated into the *beau monde*; time will fly; hours will be minutes, particularly in a ball-room, when surrounded by beaux, flattering, admiring, and soliciting your hand; you have yet no idea of the delightful intoxication, the enchanting delirium, that will seize your senses, when you feel the triumphant certainty that you are an object of envy to your own sex, and of adoration to the men."

The cheek of Miss Lambart crimsoned with the blush of modesty, as she protested she had no wish to become either the one or the other.

"As yet you are a novice," resumed Mrs. Chatterton; "and not having entered the temple of fashion, may be allowed to feel indifferent to pleasures and triumphs you have never enjoyed; but when once the gates are unfolded to you, when you see the incense roll, the worship paid, you will be eager to be distinguished as the high-priestess of fashion, the arbitress of taste, to whom obedient crowds bend to receive laws, dictated by whim and caprice, whose smiles are courted by young

and old, and whose approbation is a passport to the most *recherché* circles."

Miss Lambart thought the loquacity and volubility of the honourable Mrs. Chatterton most extraordinary; she felt wearied of a conversation that appeared to be endless, and was glad to see Miss Obrien enter, supported by her maid. To the inquiries made after her health, Miss Obrien, in a tone, and with a look of languor, said—"My head is distracted; the winding of horns, the rattling of coaches, ringing of bells, running up and down stairs, and the banging of doors, have kept me awake all night.—Millefleur, where are the volatile drops—have you got my vinaigrette?"

"*Oui*, my laty."

Having applied the vinaigrette to her nose, Miss Obrien languidly resumed—"Defend me from the midnight horrors of an inn! I would have given the world to repose my throbbing temples an hour or two longer; but persons of robust constitutions, who have strong nerves and unfailing spirits, have no pity for those of weak and delicate systems.—Where are my

renovating drops, Millefleur? I am so dreadfully tremulous, so shockingly——”

“The carriage is at the door, and every thing ready, madame,” said Mrs. Chatterton’s tall Swiss footman.

Miss O’Brien, having hastily swallowed her renovating drops, suffered herself to be supported to the carriage, where, drawing her veil over her face, and wrapping her Cashmere closely round her, the languid beauty sunk into a corner, and remained so silent, that Miss Lambart supposed she had fallen asleep; but just as the honourable Mrs. Chatterton remarked the badness of the road, and expressed a wish that they had set off an hour sooner, with her fear that they should not reach Doneraile Castle in time to dress for dinner, Miss O’Brien started up, uttered a piercing shriek, and clasping her hands together, entreated Mrs. Chatterton to order the carriage to stop. Miss Lambart looked alarmed, but the honourable Mrs. Chatterton, with the most perfect composure, asked—“For what—why are we to stop?”

“Stop, I entreat you stop,” repeated

Miss O'Brien; "have you no pity—do you not perceive——"

"I perceive we are yet only two miles on our way, and that you intend to make yourself extremely unpleasant," said Mrs. Chatterton; "what is the matter?"

"My little treasure, my darling beautiful Don Carlos, is left behind," almost shrieked Miss O'Brien.

"Is that all?" returned the honourable Mrs. Chatterton, coolly; "I dare say the people at the inn will take care of him till you send for him, and one of the servants can go back to-morrow."

"Connel shall go back for him immediately," said Miss O'Brien; "I would not let him remain a day with those vulgar people at the inn for the universe; they would make him ill with fat pork and greasy mutton; I beg you will instantly stop the carriage," attempting, but unsuccessfully, to put down the front glass.

"I do not see how this affair is to be managed," said Mrs. Chatterton; "for though you may be able to do without Connel, I cannot possibly dispense with the attendance of Chamaunde; and if the

chaise goes back, they will never overtake us. You really must make up your mind to proceed without your dog; he will do very well at the inn till you can send for him."

"I will not proceed without sending after my darling Don Carlos," persisted Miss O'Brien.

"I wish the little beast was at the bottom of the Liffey," said the honourable Mrs. Chatterton.

"How inhuman!" exclaimed Miss O'Brien; "but I always knew you to be hard-hearted and unfeeling—not an atom of softness or tenderness in your composition."

"You established your character for tenderness and feeling," retorted Mrs. Chatterton, "when you ordered Connel to twist the heads of your canary-birds off, because their notes were too shrill for your delicate ears."

"It is a vile falsehood," replied Miss O'Brien, forgetting politeness and her weak nerves; "that is one of your wicked inventions; but it is well known you are a slanderous old woman."

“Old woman!” screamed the honourable Mrs. Chatterton, looking like a fury; “old woman indeed! how dare you have the impertinence to use such an insulting term to me, who am only a very few years older than yourself? old woman!, it is really unbearable such insolence. If your uncle, the honourable Mr. Chatterton, was alive, you would not have dared to take the liberty of calling me an old woman.”

“Poor silly man,” returned Miss O'Brien, “you put on the amiable to perfection while he lived; he was blind to all your arts, or he would never have left so large a portion of his fortune to you, to the exclusion of his own relations.”

“You at least have no reason to complain of my arts, Miss O'Brien,” replied the honourable Mrs. Chatterton; “your uncle left you fifteen thousand pounds, remember; and ten thousand more at my death.”

“And what is fifteen thousand pounds?” said Miss O'Brien, contemptuously; “it was but a paltry bequest for a man of the honourable Mr. Chatterton's fortune to leave an adopted niece; and, as every body

says, would have been more than trebled, had not he, when in his dotage, married a young wife, who knew how to manage him, and turn his folly to her own advantage."

"You are a most ungrateful, wicked ——but I will not discompose my spirits," replied the honourable Mrs. Chatterton; "I despise your malicious insinuations; and thank my stars my fortune is well secured, beyond your power to alter or——"

"Oh yes," interrupted Miss O'Brien; "let your cousin Gharraty, the lawyer, alone for that; he took good care I should not benefit much by any thing my uncle left behind him."

"If you were not the most ungrateful creature in the world, you would not assert such a falsehood," said Mrs. Chatterton; "do you not live at my expence? are not your servants paid and maintained by me? and have not you always had my carriage at your command?"

"I owe you no obligation on that account," replied Miss O'Brien; "it was specified in my uncle's will, that I was to reside with you, to be allowed a man and

maid-servant, and the use of a carriage, till I was of age, or married."

"Your being of age certainly affords me a prospect of release from your affectation and ill-temper," returned the honourable Mrs. Chatterton; "of your marrying there appears little hope at present."

"More perhaps than you are aware of," said Miss O'Brien; "but I am certain if something does not shortly occur to remove me from you, I shall sink into my grave, for my health and spirits have been ruined, and my heart almost broken, by your violence of temper and unfeeling disposition."

"Sweet, gentle, uncomplaining sufferer!" resumed Mrs. Chatterton, with a sneer; "the man who is unfortunate enough to marry you, will be entitled to all my pity; though I shall most sincerely rejoice when the day arrives that will deliver me from so disagreeable a companion as yourself."

Miss Lambart was distressed and terrified at this altercation, which she thought highly improper and unladylike on either side; but it was not yet ended; for Miss

Obrien screamed with all her might to the postillions to stop, vehemently protesting she would not proceed till her servant was dispatched back to the inn for her darling pet, Don Carlos, whose life should not be put to hazard, because Mrs. Chatterton dreaded the trifling inconvenience of not being dressed in time for the countess of Vandeleur's dinner.

The altercation was again commencing between the ladies, with renewed bitterness and obstinacy; and Miss Lambart, unaccustomed to such scenes, had shrunk back in the carriage, pale and disgusted, wishing herself safe again at Lisburn Abbey, when the ostler from the inn rode up with the cause of dissension, which he thrust in at the carriage-window, where he was received with exclamations of joy and affection by Miss Obrien, who called him all sorts of endearing names, to the great entertainment of the ostler, who, grinning and scratching his carrotty head, hoped her honour's ladyship, long life to her, would not forget to give Pat O'Gorrigan a trifle for his trouble in bringing the swate crater—"For sure, my lady, and he has

been plaguy troublesome,” said Pat; “for faith now, he rolled out of my pocket, where I thought the little baste would lie snug, and asy, and comfortable, but not he sure—he yelped and tore, and at last down the stupid fool tumbled headlong into the mud. Och, sure and sure, it was enough to make one crack one’s sides with laughing, to see him kicking, and sprawling, and throwing the dirt about! sure now the animal has changed the colour of his coat; but a tub of water will make him clane, and nate, and elegant again.”

“Tumbled into the mud!” said Miss O’Brien. “Oh, my poor dear Carlos, what you must have suffered! I should not wonder if the sweet creature’s bones are broken or dislocated.”

“No danger of that,” replied Pat, grinning and shewing a set of immense large white teeth; “his bones, sure, are never the worse, for the place he fell into was as soft as a feather-bed, only not quite so clane.”

“What a savage! what a barbarian!” said Miss O’Brien, “to let such a precious creature fall.” Then handing half-a-crown

to the man, she told him he deserved no other reward than a good horse-whipping, for letting the dear creature fall, who might have had his legs broke, or his neck.

“Och, sure now and that is very true, what you are saying,” replied Pat, tying the half-crown carefully in a corner of the red kerchief he wore about his neck, adding, as he rode away—“And if the little devil of a whelp had broke his neck, sorrow any loss that would have been, for if you love puppies, there is always a great plenty of them to be met every where.”

Glad to escape the rough handling of Pat O’Gorrigan, Don Carlos jumped and yelped in the lap of his mistress, licking her face, and rubbing his muddy paws and coat upon her cheeks and neck, and on the rich velvet pelisse in which she travelled, till even she began to weary of his caresses and demonstrations of joy.

Miss Lambart did not dare to cast her eyes towards Miss Obrien, whose face, streaked and cross-barred with mud, from the paws and ears of Don Carlos, was a most ludicrous spectacle; and so fearful was she of offending the young lady by

laughing, that she was glad when the shades of evening concealed an object, that in spite of her best effort excited her risibility.

Mrs. Chatterton having desired the postillions to push on, contented herself with grumbling at the delay Don Carlos had occasioned, and calling him a filthy beast, declared he should never again enter a carriage with her; to which Miss Obrien made no reply, but covered her favourite with an expensive Thibet shawl, and leaning back her head, slept, or pretended to sleep.

The honourable Mrs. Chatterton's temper having no longer excitement, began to cool; and reflection told her that she had exposed herself and her niece, in a way that she should not like repeated to the countess of Vandeleur, who detested scenes, and considered family disputes extremely vulgar. Certainly neither herself or Miss Obrien had considered that Miss Lambart might so represent their conduct, as to exclude them from Doneraile Castle; for the countess had particularly recommended the young heiress to her attention

—“ And instead of entertaining Miss Lambart, I have been quarrelling about a little ugly beast, that I should be glad to see hanged,” thought Mrs. Chatterton ; “ and if I fall under the displeasure of the countess, I shall lose caste, and never more receive invitations, or be distinguished in the higher circles.”

While the honourable Mrs. Chatterton was considering in what way to apologize to Miss Lambart for the *démêlé* between Miss O'Brien and herself, Ada was thinking of the home she had left, and the difference of character and behaviour evinced by the baroness of Wandesford on all occasions, to that of Mrs. Chatterton ; unconsciously she sighed at the comparison.

The quick ear of Mrs. Chatterton caught the sigh, and she now oppressed the already wearied Ada with fears that she was unwell, and hopes that she was not suffering from a return of the headach, or from the closeness of the carriage, offering to let down the glass, for the benefit of the fresh air.

Miss Lambart was only sick in mind, and though she would herself have liked

to admit the air, she declined Mrs. Chatterton's offer, fearing it might not be agreeable to the delicate Miss Obrien.

The honourable Mrs. Chatterton now pressed her repeater; the lateness of the hour again discomposed her temper, and she exclaimed—"I knew how it would be; dinner will be served before I am half dressed: I do not suppose I shall be time enough to go in with the dessert. I think no woman breathing has so many trials for their temper as I have: I remember, just before I went abroad, I was putting on a dress I had just received from England, being invited by the viceroy to a ball at the Castle, when behold, of all provoking things that could happen, my maid, in holding a candle, that I might see the effect of the trimming in a whole-length mirror, set fire to my train, and not only disappointed me of a night's amusement, but put my life in peril by her carelessness: nor was this all—before I could get another dress sent over, two ladies of my acquaintance had procured the fashion, and I was neither envied nor followed. Such

disappointments are enough to ruffle the most placid temper; but all this is nothing compared with the vexation of not reaching Doneraile Castle in time to dress for dinner, because I have a reason, a particular motive for wishing it."

"Your wish, madam," said Miss Lambart, "will, I hope, be gratified, for if you will look to the right, you may plainly distinguish the lights that constantly burn in the towers of Doneraile Castle."

The honourable Mrs. Chatterton bestowed high praise on her horses, and when they arrived at the castle, was not sorry to find the countess of Vandeleur had just retired to her dressing-room.

Miss O'Brien, the instant she left the carriage, consigned the mud-disfigured Don Carlos to the care of her footman, to undergo a purifying ablution, and to be perfumed with *esprit de rose*. Having given her orders respecting her four-footed favourite, without taking the least notice of Miss Lambart or her aunt, she followed the servant appointed to shew the apartment allotted to her use.

The honourable Mrs. Chatterton, to

whom Ada stopped to pay her thanks before she ascended the grand staircase, for her safe, though certainly most unpleasant conveyance, took the opportunity of requesting, as a most particular favour, that she would not mention the little *brouille-rie* about the dog, though, no doubt, she must have thought Miss Obrien's language and behaviour altogether improper. "Poor thing!" said Mrs. Chatterton, affecting the amiable, "she has been a spoilt child, indulged to folly by her dear uncle, the late honourable Mr. Chatterton; besides, she is really extremely nervous, and great allowances are to be made for persons whom weakness of constitution render irritable."

Miss Lambart's opinion of both ladies was not to be altered by excuse or apology; but determined never again to be compelled to witness their disputes, by becoming their travelling companion, she assured Mrs. Chatterton of her secresy, and was suffered to proceed. But having reached the corridor, instead of being suffered to occupy her former apartment, she was

conducted to one that was much more spacious and magnificent, commanding a wide and romantic view of the adjacent country. Ada surveyed the splendid adornments of her chamber, and wondered why she was removed from that she had always occupied, especially as this appeared to have been newly furnished in the Chinese style—the walls were beautifully painted to represent the imperial gardens at Peking, the bed and window-draperies were of bright yellow silk, damasked with the beautiful flowers and birds of China, in rich and elegant variety, and the carpet was a costly specimen from the looms of Persia.

Miss Lambart found Janet busily spreading out her new dresses and trinkets in the adjoining dressing-room, where a glass, to display the full-length figure, glittered in a frame of ivory, inlaid with gold; and perfume cases, with a variety of useful and ornamental articles of ivory, gold, and richly-cut glass, decorated the toilet of bright yellow satin, covered with point lace.

“What a beautiful bed-chamber and

dressing-room, Miss Lambart!" exclaimed Janet, casting her delighted eyes over the superb adornments of the place; "the castle has been almost new-furnished since you were here. If you remember, these rooms were hung with old-fashioned tapestry, with figures of knights on horseback, with falcons on their wrists; but, dear me! how much better and handsomer the walls look now! one might almost think one was walking in those delightful gardens, they look so natural; and only see, Miss Lambart, what beautiful fine lace the toilet is covered with. I declare I shall be afraid to touch those elegant boxes and bottles, for they look too delicate and too fine for use."

"I should have preferred my former apartment," replied Miss Lambart, "though it boasted none of these adornments; but come, Janet, make haste and dress me, or I shall not be in time for dinner."

Janet was earnest in recommending one of the new dresses.—"This pale blue," said she, "trimmed with blond and artificial flowers—I am sure you will look beautiful in it."

But Miss Lambart rejected the pale blue, and selected a muslin frock, to the great disappointment of Janet.

Nothing could be more simply elegant than Miss Lambart's appearance, when the duties of the toilet were completed. She wore no other ornaments than a pearl comb, to confine the glossy ringlets of her raven hair, and a chain of pearl on her ivory neck. Before she descended to the drawing-room, the countess of Vandeleur sent her woman to request she would step into her dressing-room for a few minutes.

Miss Lambart found her aunt, as usual, dressed in the very height of fashion, putting the finishing stroke to her beauty, with a camel's hair brush, with which she softened down the glare of her rouge into a more delicate and natural tint.

"The countess of Vandeleur saluted Ada's cheek with much seeming affection, declared herself happy to see her, expressed surprise to see her so much grown, and complimented her on the very becoming style in which her hair was arranged. She then inquired after the health of the baroness Wandesford.

Ada replied—"The health of the baroness was better than it had been for some time."

"She has a wonderful constitution," resumed the countess, "or making that gloomy old abbey her constant residence, would have killed her long ago."

"I never found the abbey gloomy," replied Miss Lambert; "and the walks about it are delightful."

"To you, *peut-être*; but the baroness is an old woman," said the countess, "and can have little pleasure in walking; in fact, she has reached that age when life can afford her but little enjoyment; the next winter will, I dare say, carry her off."

"Heaven forbid!" replied Miss Lambert; "I hope she will live many, very many years."

"That is but a silly sort of wish of yours, child," resumed the countess, "for the baroness is supposed to be very rich, and, *sans doute*, you will succeed to her wealth—Tears, as I live! for pity sake, disperse them as quick as possible, or you will not be fit to appear at dinner.—I only spoke in jest. I am sure I wish the

baroness may live for fifty years, if it will give you pleasure."

Ada wiped away the falling tears, but her heart was sad, as she remembered the advanced age of the baroness, and the probability that death would shortly deprive her of the only relation whom she truly loved—the revered monitress, whose lips never uttered an unkind or uncharitable sentiment, whose advice was the pure essence of goodness and virtue.

"The countess of Vandeleur perceived she had touched a wrong note, and anxious to change the *penseroso* for *allegro*, she inquired how Miss Lambart liked the honourable Mrs. Chatterton, and whether Miss O'Brien was a beauty.—"I remember she had a fine complexion," said the countess, "and full blue eyes, but she was too thin; perhaps, though, her person has improved since I saw her, which is now full three years.

Ada thought Miss O'Brien very lovely.

"Indeed!" resumed the countess, "I wonder Alfred never mentioned her in his letters; they were together a good deal at Milan; but I suppose *la belle blonde* is

not to his taste, *tant mieux*, as I am certain she would not have been to the earl of Vandeleur's or mine. Does she dress well, I wonder?"

On that point, Miss Lambart was incompetent to speak, having only seen Miss O'Brien in a pelisse.

The countess having completed her toilet, surveyed her niece from head to foot.—"Your dress will do very well," said she, with a gracious smile, "for we have only a very small party to dinner—lady Leighton, lord Charles Rokeby, lady Mazarina Macnamara, the honourable Mrs Chatterton—the countess never mentioned her friend without attaching the honourable to her name, because she dreaded being suspected of an acquaintance with a plebeian—her niece, Miss O'Brien, sir Philip Egerton, and the honourable colonel Lismore, none of whom stay with us but the two last-named gentlemen, and your fellow-travellers. On Thursday, which you will recollect is your birthday, Miss Lambart, we shall entertain a large party; the earl, in honour of that day, re-

quested I would give a dinner and ball, which you will believe was perfectly agreeable to my wish; and I flatter myself, Miss Lambart, you will oblige me by suffering me to superintend your toilet on that occasion, and that you will wear such ornaments as I shall select and approve."

Ada, having promised to submit the adornment of her person to the taste of the countess, was complimented on her dutiful acquiescence and good sense, in leaving the becoming and proper to her, who would take care that her appearance should be fashionable and elegant.

Miss Lambart had always considered simplicity in dress, at her age, most elegant, and she dreaded being loaded with finery and superfluous ornaments; but she made up her mind to be dressed this one day after the taste of the countess, but never to submit to be the slave of fashion.

"My dear Ada," said the countess, looking at her watch, "we have still a few minutes to spare; we will, if you please, just peep into the library, that you may see the earl of Vandeleur before we join the party in the drawing-room, where su-

periority of beauty will be strongly contested by the brunette and the blonde. You need not blush, child," continued the countess, "for you are neither blonde nor brunette, though I am persuaded many will say you eclipse both:—*fi done, ma chère*; your patrician blood should teach you to get the better of so plebeian a custom as blushing; leave it to the *canaille* to look abashed when a compliment is paid to their beauty."

The earl of Vandeleur received his niece with less frigidity and stateliness of manner than she had ever remembered; he seemed to have forgot his usual formality, as he saluted her cheek, and welcomed her to Doneraile Castle; he even condescended to say she was grown surprisingly, and the improvement in her person exceeded his warmest hopes. Again he welcomed her to the castle, and requested that she would always name her wishes; for it was his particular desire that her stay might be rendered pleasant and agreeable to her.

Miss Lambart could scarcely believe her senses; the cold, repulsive earl of Vande-

leur retaining her hand in his, speaking kind words, and looking at her with a smiling countenance! when they last parted, he had spoken to her harshly, because she rejected the counsels of Mr. Burke, and refused to become a proselyte to his faith; there was no recurrence to the past; the earl was now all suavity and compliment, and appeared to have forgotten that she was that little heretic who had boldly defended the purity of the Protestant, and pointed out the errors and absurdities of the Catholic belief: but Ada had not time at that moment to reconcile the past and the present, or seek a solution of the enigmatical conduct of the earl and countess; for referring to the time-piece on the mantel-shelf, the earl observed, there would be hardly time to introduce Miss Lambart to their guests before dinner was served.

The countess, ever regardful of etiquette, immediately rose from her seat, and led the way to the drawing-room, where the earl presented his niece, Miss Lambart, to the admiring beaux, and envious belles—for admiring and envious they were, as had been foretold by the honourable Mrs.

Chatterton, but without raising any corresponding emotions in the pure and tranquil bosom of Ada.

The honourable Mrs. Chatterton was received by her friend, the countess of Vandeleur, with a thousand welcomes and kind inquiries; when, having presented Miss O'Brien to the earl and countess, she was entering into an account of the accidents, pleasures, disappointments, and wonders, she had met in her travels on the Continent, when, to the great relief of most of her auditors, dinner was announced, and cut short the thread of her narration.

The honourable colonel Lismore, whom the modesty and beauty of Ada had greatly attracted, pushed himself rather rudely before sir Philip Egerton, who had designed himself the honour of handing Miss Lambart to the *salle à manger*. Nodding his head to the disappointed baronet, as he offered his arm to Miss Lambart, the colonel gaily said—"You are distanced, Hal."

Sir Philip frowning, and biting his lip, was retreating from the door, when Miss O'Brien placed her arm under his, and

whispered—"Do not look so terribly disappointed, though you feel so."

"Disappointed!" repeated the baronet, trying to hide his chagrin; "'pon honour, I do not understand what disappointment you allude to; I was merely waiting to have the honour of conducting you down stairs."

At dinner, colonel Lismore placed himself next to Miss Lambart, on whom he bestowed all his attention, to the great displeasure and mortification of lady Mazarina Maenamara, who had flattered herself that the handsome colonel, who had flirted with her at balls, concerts, and soirees, for the last six months, was actually devoted to her; and she felt the scorpion stings of envy and jealousy, when she saw him so entirely engrossed, that he had neither look, word, nor smile, but for Miss Lambart.

The countess of Vandeleur, though her conversation and attention seemed divided among her guests, kept an observant eye on the ingenuous countenance of her lovely niece, endeavouring to read what impression the honourable colonel Lismore's handsome person and insinuating manners

were making on her inexperienced heart ; but Ada's look was so calm and unembarrassed, that the countess became satisfied she was not likely to be guilty of the folly of falling in love at first sight.

Lady Mazarina Macnamara was the youngest of five unmarried sisters, to each of whom their father had left ten thousand pounds ; but though of ancient Milesian family, and tolerably handsome, her fortune was not sufficient to tempt any of the beaux, that called her the lovely brunette, to make her a serious offer ; and lady Mazarina Macnamara, at six-and-twenty, seemed no nearer the desirable state of matrimony than she was at sixteen, when she commenced her first flirtation at a ball at the Castle at Dublin, where the viceroy, on her introduction, pronounced her a lovely brunette ; by which complimentary appellation she was still recognised, though the innovations of time, with the harassing effects of wishing, sighing, and disappointment, had robbed her of the bloom and freshness of youth, and induced the necessity of resorting to art, to repair her diminished beauty. The honourable colonel Lismore,

with twenty thousand pounds a-year, and great expectations from an old maiden aunt, was a prize she had exerted all her powers of pleasing to obtain; and success had seemed to smile on her endeavours, for the handsome colonel had danced with her, driven her in his curriole, and flirted with her, in the absence of younger and more agreeable competitors, till she had believed him fast bound in her chains; and under this impression, had written to her sisters, boasting of her conquest, and informing them that she was in momentary expectation of the grand question. Alas! poor lady Mazarina! it was now evident to her mortified vanity, that the colonel had only been amusing himself, without any other intention than that of passing his time agreeably, and that he had no passion for her, or design to offer himself to her acceptance; while Miss Lambart, a mere child, being a rich heiress, had attractions powerful enough to make him forget how often he had squeezed her hand, compared her eyes to the stars, and “*sighed and looked unutterable things.*”

But while lady Mazarina Macnamara’s

bosom was heaving with the tormenting passions of envy, hatred, and malice; the innocent and unconscious Miss Lambart received the attentions of the honourable colonel Lismore, without attaching any deeper meaning to them, than the usual politeness shewn by a well-bred man to a female, placed beside him at a dinner-table.

On retiring to the drawing-room, Miss O'Brien did her possible to keep sir Philip Egerton near her; but finding that Miss Lambart was the rising sun, to whom all the gentlemen were eager to offer their adorations, she threw a contemptuous glance on sir Philip, mentally pitied his bad taste, and ensconcing Don Carlos behind a cushion, she threw herself, in a negligent attitude, on a sofa, and pretended to sleep.

“What insufferable affectation!” exclaimed lady Leighton; “do look at Miss O'Brien; see what pains she takes to show her embroidered slippers.”

“Her taper ancles you mean,” replied lady Mazarina Macnamara; “for my part, I think her attitude extremely indelicate; but this is *à la mode de Paris*, I suppose;

and that *babillarde*, Mrs. Chatterton, encourages and sets her an example of——”

“Hush! hush!” interrupted lady Leighton; “you forget the honourable Mrs. Chatterton is of the cabinet council, chief favourite of the empress.”

“What empress are you speaking of,” asked lady Mazarina, “some empress of Mrs. Chatterton’s own creation, for she does not scruple to avail herself of the traveller’s privilege?”

“Nay now, that is being too severe,” replied lady Leighton; “the empress Vandeleur I mean; bless me, child, how dull you are of comprehension! do you not perceive the state she takes upon her, the respect she exacts? I am positively ennuied with her pomp and hauteur.”

“I dare say I should feel exactly as you do,” replied lady Mazarina, not choosing to commit herself, “if it was not for the pleasure I take in meeting my friends, for which reason I should extremely regret being overlooked in her invitations.”

“I am heartily glad,” resumed lady Leighton, “that a prior engagement will

prevent my staying till the arrival of the heir."

Lady Mazarina knew she had not been invited, and that she had no prior engagement; and she could scarcely suppress a smile, as lady Leighton continued to say—"I have not the slightest ambition to increase the number of the countess of Vandeleur's satellites, or to be one of the idolators to bow down before the calf, that will shortly be set up for the worship of the weak and silly."

"Who is severe now?" said lady Mazarina, who greatly enjoyed the evident pique and disappointment of lady Leighton; "I acknowledge the countess of Vandeleur is proud; but then, you know, her house is allowed to be the temple of fashion, and her entertainments elegant, *recherche*——"

"They certainly are in perfect good taste," interrupted lady Leighton, "and it would be all very well, if it was not considered such a mighty honour to be present at them."

"I am sure I feel greatly disappointed

when I do not receive a ticket," said lady Mazarina.

"For my part," returned lady Leighton, biting her lip for vexation, "I am quite indifferent about the matter;" but fearing she should say something that, if repeated, might entirely exclude her from the countess of Vandeleur's parties, she turned to lord Charles Rokeby, who stood near her, and said—"Oh, lord Charles, what complaint was you making against Miss Obrien's Spanish dog?"

"I said it was a little ill-tempered beast," replied lord Charles; "I only pinched its ear, and it snarled and bit my finger. Gad's curse," continued his lordship, "his confounded teeth have obliged me to plaister my finger; and I am really apprehensive," looking sorrowfully on his delicate white hand, "I shall have my finger disfigured with an ugly scar."

"La, what a pity!" exclaimed lady Mazarina; "I always hated dogs."

"But have no objection to puppies," returned lord Charles, laughing at his own wit.

"Or she would not admit you to the

honour of her acquaintance," said lady Leighton.

"Much obliged for your good opinion, 'pon my honour," replied lord Charles, bowing.

"How ill-natured and unjust!" rejoined lady Mazarina, with the hope of insinuating herself into his lordship's regard; "it is true, lord Charles Rokeby's dress, appointments, and manners, are distinguished for their extreme elegance, but nothing can be more distinct from puppyism."

"Your ladyship does me too much honour," replied lord Charles; "you really overpower my modesty, and you must pardon me, if I decline listening any longer to my own praise."

"Fool!" muttered lady Mazarina.

"Fop!" said lady Leighton, as his lordship seated himself on the sofa, on which Miss Obrien continued to recline.

"What a beautiful little foot," said lord Charles. "The embroidery of that pink satin slipper is French."

"Your lordship is *au fait* in all matters of taste," replied Miss Obrien, languidly

raising her head from the eider-down cushion on which it reposed. "How horridly dull every body seems! can you tell, my lord, how we are to get rid of this tedious evening?"

"We are going to have some music, I believe," replied lord Charles, "for I see colonel Lismore is placing a harp before Miss Lambart."

"Oh for some cotton to stuff my ears!" exclaimed Miss Obrien; "I wonder the countess can suffer the poor thing to expose herself; she certainly forgets that Lismore is a connoisseur in music, and that he plays and sings himself, much better than Chesterfield thinks becoming in a person of rank."

"But whatever is attempted by a beauty," said lord Charles, "must be excellent."

"Beauty!" repeated Miss Obrien—"I fancy I do not clearly understand. Of whose beauty is your lordship speaking?"

"Of Miss Lambart's," replied lord Charles;—"I think her a divine creature."

"Really—well I shall not attempt to dispute your lordship's taste," said Miss

Obrien, "*mais vous vous moquez de moi.*"

"No, 'pon my honour," returned lord Charles, "I never was more serious. Shall I lead you to the other end of the room?"

"No, I thank you, I am quite near enough," said Miss Obrien; "my long stay abroad has spoiled my taste for the singing and music of this country."

Lord Charles, perceiving she was burying her head in the sofa pillows, left her to join the circle formed round Miss Lambart, who, with much taste and feeling, was singing to her own accompaniment, the justly-admired "*Ellen-a-Roon.*"

The countess of Vandeleur's eyes shone with gratified pride, as she listened to the praise bestowed on the voice and science of her niece, whose debut had obtained the eclat she had not ventured to promise herself. The earl of Vandeleur, charmed with the graceful and easy manners of Ada, and vanquished by "*the melody of sweet sounds,*" descended from his high state, and warmly avowing his delight, requested colonel Lismore to join Miss Lambart in a duet he named.

Miss Obrien finding herself left alone, and absolutely forgotten, was so goaded by pride and envy, that she shook off her languor, and starting up, determined to eclipse Miss Lambart, and force the recreant lord Charles Rokeby to acknowledge the supremacy of her beauty and her voice. Arranging the lace veil, that hung negligently over her shoulder, and parting her light auburn ringlets from her left eye, she softly joined the circle at the close of the duet.—“How ravishing that shake! how powerful and mellifluous is Miss Lambart’s voice! how correct her taste!” exclaimed Miss Obrien.

Lord Charles looked her full in the face, but nothing abashed, the fair Machiavelli declared Miss Lambart’s voice equalled any of the prima donnas she had ever heard at the Italian and French operas.

Lady Mazarina Macnamara disliked Miss Obrien, but she absolutely detested Miss Lambart; and wishing to see her vocal talent thrown into shade, she artfully insinuated that Miss Lambart ought not to be allowed to strain her voice by over exertion, and that Miss Obrien——”

“Oh pray, my dear creature, do not mention me,” interrupted Miss Obrien; “I could not have the presumption to sing after Miss Lambart.”

This disclaiming had the effect she wished, and the entreaties of the company prevailed on her to let colonel Lismore place the harp before her, when, after many declarations that she had a cold, and was out of practice, she sang a fashionable Italian canzonet; but though Miss Obrien had a fine voice, and had taken, while abroad, lessons from the first masters, her manner was too affected to be pleasing, and the shakes and graces she introduced, spoiled the simple effect the composer intended to produce.

Miss Obrien was complimented so warmly, that she flattered herself she had obtained a triumph; while every one, except the honourable Mrs. Chatterton, awarded the palm of victory to Miss Lambart.

In the midst of a discussion on the merits of different composers, Miss Obrien's dog set up a howl.—“Does your dog

sing, Miss Obrien?" asked sir Philip Egerton.

"Ridiculous," replied she; "who ever heard of a dog singing?"

"*Pardonnez moi*, I meant no offence," said sir Philip; "but in this enlightened age, I did not know how far the canine race might have advanced in the march of intellect. When I was last in England, I remember there was a repository of dogs, that I went to visit, and there was a price set on each animal, according to its attainments."

"I did not purchase my dog at a repository," replied Miss Obrien; "it was a present from——"

"A Spanish grandee, no doubt," interrupted lord Charles Rokeby, "by your calling him Don Carlos."

"I shall not satisfy your curiosity," replied Miss Obrien; "you will know one day or other, perhaps, why I am so fond of the dear little love."

Lady Leighton's carriage being announced, she departed with lady Mazarina Macnamara, who wished the innocent Miss Lambart good night, with a heart

full of envy, hatred, and malice. Lord Charles Rokeby took his leave at the same time.

Sir Philip Egerton and colonel Lismore were staying at the castle; but before supper, Ada had excused herself to the countess, on the plea of fatigue, and retired to her chamber, where, while Janet addressed her, she said—"It is now about the time we used to go to rest at Lisburn Abbey. Heaven bless my dear aunt, and end her a peaceful night!"

CHAP. III.

“ Be on your guard, for you will need the sage
 Admonishing of reason, to secure
 Your virtue from the blandishments of
 Pleasure : this is the hall of Circe—those
 Nymphs are beautiful to enchant.”

.....

Say what abridgement have you for the evening?
 What mask? what music? How shall we beguile
 The lazy time, if not with some delight?

Midsummer Night's Dream.

.....

“ Some praise the rose, in blushing sweetness drest,
 Some the proud tulip's gaudy tinctur'd vest;
 Some the chaste lily's white and bending head;
 And some the violet on its humble bed:
 Thus female beauty, whether brown or fair,
 Of admiration will obtain its share;
 Whate'er the colour of the fair one's eye,
 Its thrilling glance provokes a lover's sigh.”

THE following morning, the countess of Vandeleur sent to invite her friend, the honourable Mrs. Chatterton, to a *tête-à-tête* breakfast in her dressing-room, which, in spite of the honour such a distinction conferred, did not turn out quite so agreeable as she anticipated; for after strictly en-

joining her to secrecy, the countess made her the confidant of her own and the earl's intention of bringing about a marriage between Alfred lord Conway, their son, and Miss Lambart, their niece. —“ And, my near friend,” said the countess, “ from the account you gave in your obliging favour from Milan, I am persuaded the young people can raise no possible objection to the union; you, on whose judgment I have a perfect reliance, described lord Conway as very handsome; and the most fastidious connoisseur in beauty must allow Miss Lambart's person to be a most finished specimen of female beauty; she is even more lovely than her mother was.”

The honourable Mrs. Chatterton was not a little surprised to hear the countess allude to lady Lambart's beauty, because the full-length picture of her ladyship that occupied a place among the family portraits in the gallery of the castle, had only extreme fairness to compensate for a childish and unmeaning set of features, to which “ pretty” was the highest praise that could be given. Though honoured with more

of confidence than any other of her acquaintance, the countess had carefully concealed from her dear friend, that Ada was the daughter of lady Amanda Fitzgerald, suffering her, as well as the world in general, to believe that the child of lady Amanda had not survived its mother, and that her immense wealth had devolved to herself and the baroness Wandesford, her nearest relations.

“As to Miss Lambart,” said the countess, sipping her chocolate, “she is so young, and has hitherto lived so secluded from the world, so entirely out of the way of flattery, that I can venture to affirm, with positive certainty, that she has no prepossession in favour of any one, to prevent the accomplishment of this most desirable alliance.”

“Colonel Lismore is very handsome, and extremely insinuating,” returned Mrs. Chatterton; “my dear countess, have you no apprehension that he may prove an obstacle in the way of your wishes?”

“No,” replied the countess, “not in the least; the saintly baroness Wandesford has infused into Miss Lambart’s mind such

an abhorrence of intrigue, that the very idea of a *petit affaire d'amour*, though merely *pour passer le temps*, would be considered by her a crime of such magnitude, as female delicacy could never overlook or pardon; and I have taken care that his reputed amour with lady Cranfield should reach her ears, in time to prevent any impression his handsome person might make in his favour."

The honourable Mrs. Chatterton warmly commended the prudent management of the countess, though she had a secret suspicion that lord Conway was not as free from impressions as his lady-mother hoped and believed; but dreading nothing so much as being excluded from her circle, she confined her thoughts to her own bosom, and determined to affect ignorance of the very particular attentions his lordship had paid Miss Obrien at Milan; and having, while abroad, cunningly shut her eyes, she determined still to pursue the same wary line of conduct; and whatever might happen, to be entirely innocent in the affair. Strictly observing this plan, she never dropped a hint to her niece of

what she was secretly observing, but affected to believe she had rejected the marchese Montalto's offer of his hand, for the sake of a young Englishman, the heir to an earldom, who had fluttered in her train at Milan, from whence he had been suddenly recalled to England by the illness of his mother; and when the countess of Vandeleur questioned her respecting lord Conway's conduct and reception among the females at Milan, she artfully praised, and spoke of his lordship in the highest terms, protesting her belief that he would return every thing the heart of a parent could wish, free from any attachment; for she had never heard that he distinguished any lady in particular, except it was the marchesa Velomini.

"A young beautiful woman, no doubt," said the countess, with a look of alarm.

"Quite the contrary," replied Mrs. Chatterton; "she was old and ugly."

"And lord Conway attached to her!" exclaimed the countess; "impossible!"

"Have patience, my dear countess," resumed Mrs. Chatterton, "and I will explain: the marchesa Velomini is immense-

ly rich ; she patronizes all the arts and sciences, and her conversaziones are always crowded ; for in her drawing-rooms, experiments in chemistry, exhibitions in natural magic, panoramas, and phantasmagorias, are, with other delightful entertainments, given every night ; the marchesa's acquaintance is courted by all who pretend to taste and fashion ; besides, if my memory is correct, the marchesa discovered some extraordinary likeness between lord Conway and a learned ancestor of hers, which made him a prodigious favourite."

" From an ugly old woman there is little to apprehend," observed the countess ; " had she been handsome, the case had been dangerous ; for you see what an ascendancy lady Neagle has gained over lord Charles Rokeby ; to be sure he is a fool, but that does not signify ; his fortune will be very advantageous to her, whose jointure is mortgaged to pay her debts of honour."

" But will lord Charles Rokeby marry a person whose passion for high play is so notorious ?" asked the honourable Mrs.

Chatterton, doubtingly : “ surely he is not fool enough for that.”

“ She has promised to reform,” replied the countess ; “ and, as the song says, ‘ *he loves and will believe* :’ they have had a *petit bruelle*, of which lady Mazarina Macnamara tried all her possible to take advantage : but mark my words—lord Charles Rokeby, though young enough to be lady Neagle’s son, will, before many months pass away, be her husband—such are the great advantages of beauty and experience : but, *apropos* of beauty,” continued the countess—“ your niece, Miss Obrien—*c’est une belle, et elle a l’air du grand monde*. Has she no lover, no matrimonial offer ?”

“ None that I have reason to suppose she will accept,” returned Mrs. Chatterton ; “ she rejected a very advantageous proposal at Milan, but it was from a nobleman many years her senior.”

“ What a simpleton !” said the countess ; “ I wonder, with your knowledge of the world, you did not point out the absurdity of such an objection, if the man was rich.”

The honourable Mrs. Chatterton shook her head, and replied—"I am sorry to say, Miss O'Brien is one of those self-willed young ladies, that spurn at advice; and as she is only my relative by marriage, you know, countess, and will be her own mistress in a short time, I——"

"Very true," interrupted the countess; "her establishment in life is her own concern, not yours; only having brought her up, no doubt you would wish to see her properly disposed of."

"Certainly," returned Mrs. Chatterton.

"I should have thought a rich man in his dotage would have been a most desirable husband, for a young woman with only a small fortune of her own; but perhaps she is infected with sentiment, and fancies it would be wrong to marry for any motive but the sublime one of love."

Mrs. Chatterton said, she did not believe that Miss O'Brien would allow so silly a consideration as want of love to be an impediment in the way of her interest. "I fancy," continued she, "it was dislike to residing constantly at Milan, that prevented her accepting the marchese Montalto;

at least that was the reason she assigned to me. Love! no, no, I am very certain Miss O'Brien will never suffer love to stand in the way of her ambition."

"*En vérité*, she is quite right," replied the countess, "and shows her good sense in consigning so plebeian a passion as love to the *canaille*, to whom it properly belongs: poor wretches! they may consult their inclinations, and marry for love, because they, like the Parias of India, are proscribed, and forbid to come near any other caste; but for a young woman of rank, with a small fortune, to marry for love, would be absolute insanity. With Miss O'Brien's *beauté* and *tournure charmante*, she may aspire to a match of *rang élevé*."

"I assure you, my dear countess, I have no idea that Miss O'Brien will throw herself away—she has sufficient pride to prevent a *mésalliance*; I only hope," continued Mrs. Chatterton, "that she may not be too particular in her choice, and let the opportunity slip, that would secure her rank and wealth."

"Of which we have a lamentable in-

stance in lady Mazarina Macnamara," returned the countess. "I am convinced her fate is to die an old maid; she has been coquetting, dressing, and flirting, for ten years at least, and might have married lord Phillimore, I know; but she foolishly rejected him, and fifteen thousand a-year, because he had but one eye; though that ought to have been an argument in his favour, for, as some author wittily observes, on a similar occasion—'*having but one eye, he would have seen only half her faults.*' However, I fear, in spite of all her *minauderies*, she will find she has outstaid her time, and will never have another offer."

"Lady Mazarina and her sisters must found an asylum for antiquated virgins," said the honourable Mrs. Chatterton, "for I understand they are all past the bloom of youth, and not likely to obtain husbands."

"Husbands!" repeated the countess; "no, my dear creature, they are not likely to marry, till, as the children say, 'two black Sundays come together:' the eldest, lady Urania, is so formidable a *bas-bleu*,

that she has horrified all the men of her acquaintance, with critiques, essays, and commentaries, on genealogy, chronology, meteorology, geology, mythology, phraseology, conchology, phrenology, and all the rest of the ologys."

The honourable Mrs. Chatterton laughed heartily, and protested her dear countess was the very soul of wit, and it would be quite impossible to be dull in her society.

"The other sisters," resumed the countess of Vandeleur, "divide botany, chemistry, philosophy, and astronomy, between them; and is it to be wondered that *les femmes savantes*, who profess to group the whole extensive circle of arts and sciences, are avoided by the men? The poor wretches are afraid of having the bumps on their skulls examined, their pericraniums inspected, and the shallowness of their intellects exposed."

"I comprehend now," said Mrs. Chatterton, "what lord Regan meant, by saying there was no monster he should more carefully avoid coming in contact with, than a *precieuse ridicule*, and on that ac-

count never accepted invitations to Bluestocking Hall."

"By that speech," replied the countess, "it appears that lady Mazarina has been trying the *douce charmant suave* upon him; but lord Regan is an incorrigible coxcomb, and thinks more of Adonizing his delectable person, *selon le dernier gout*, than of female charms. I do not pretend to set up for a prophetess, but I have pre-science enough to see, that lady Mazarina Maenamara will sink into a neglected spiteful old maid; and lord Regan will become a snarling fretful old bachelor."

While the countess of Vandeleur was indulging her love of scandal, and exercising her taunt for satire, and the honourable Mrs. Chatterton was contemplating with horror the possibility of becoming a subject for her contempt and ridicule, Miss Lambart, accustomed to early rising, had gone, with her attendant Janet, to the village, to the neat cabin of her foster-mother, where it was difficult to decide whether the overjoyed Norah received her own child or her foster-child with most affection. Norah had preferred living in a

little bit of a cabin of her own, to a residence at Doneraile Castle; for though the earl and countess had given her no cause of complaint, as far as related to her own personal comfort, yet she could never forgive them for being so wicked as to impose her nursling upon the world for the daughter of lady Lambart, when she well knew lady Lambart's child was a boy, dead-born; and that the little cherub she had the charge of was the daughter of lady Amanda Fitzgerald, and was christened after her mother, Amanda, only they chose to call her Ada. Norah had promised to keep the secret; and being left a widow, and residing on the earl's estate, and above all, not perceiving that it would at all benefit, but perhaps render her dear foster-child unhappy, she had been faithful to her word, though often tempted to divulge all she knew; and in addition to her dislike of the deception practised by the earl and countess, relative to Ada, she disliked continuing at the castle, because the servants, aping the example of their superiors, had completely disgusted her plain honest mind, and made her desirous to re-

move from scenes of luxury, waste, intemperance, and ill-nature, which she was daily compelled to witness, to the quiet of a little cabin, where she could dispose of her time, in a way her simple thoughts pointed out as most pleasing in the eyes of Him who will hereafter exact a strict account of the talent he has given. Idleness, fine clothes, and sumptuous living, had no seductions for Norah; and Miss Lambart, out of her own annual allowance, supplied her nurse with the means of gratifying all her wishes, enabling her to keep a cow, and to procure comforts, which she enjoyed thankfully, and dispensed to her less fortunate neighbours.

“ My dear mother,” said Miss Lambart, clasping the neck of Norah, and kissing her ruddy cheek, “ it was too late when we arrived, or you should have seen us last night; but we are come to breakfast with you; and Janet has brought you some linen she has made up for you, since she has been at Lisburn Abbey.”

“ And how is her ladyship the baroness?” asked Norah; “ well, I trust?”

Ada replied, that the health of the baro-

ness was better than it had been for some time.

Janet displayed several very neatly-made articles of wearing apparel, which the grateful Norah having admired, laid by, and busied herself to get breakfast.—“ But, my dear lady,” said she, “ what will I do, for sorrow a mouthful have I got but brown bread to give you. Och now, honey dear, if you had only but just told me you were coming; I am afraid now, darling, you will not like brown bread.”

“ Indeed I shall,” replied Miss Lambart; “ I am very fond of brown bread, and not having seen any for a long time, it will be quite a rarity. But, my dear mother, I entreat you will not call me lady; I am your child, your Ada; did not you nourish me at your bosom, and nurse and watch over me in sickness? did not you infuse into my infant mind principles of virtue and piety, and teach me to lift up my heart to Him who is the father of the fatherless? You have been to me a mother, and I will never forget the gratitude and the duty that are most justly your due; if you love me as truly as I believe

you do, let me be your child, your Ada."

Norah shed tears on the white hands that clasped hers; but they were not tears of sorrow, but of feeling, of thankfulness, that a creature so rich and lovely should be so gracious and humble.

Miss Lambart having, with her own hand, wiped away Norah's tears, presented her with ten guineas, in a neat purse, a gift from the baroness Wandesford, who had always, when she visited the earl and countess of Vandeleur, liberally remembered the nurse of her beloved child.

"I shall be too rich," said Norah. "Heaven bless the baroness! she was always kind and generous; many are the valuable gifts I have received from her hand, long life to her goodness; and many a poor man's cabin, sure, here on the earl of Vandeleur's estate, has she made happy, when those who ought to have thought of their necessities, sorrow to their hard hearts, had no time to listen to tales of trouble and misfortune, and thought only of their own pleasures and indulgence. Great prosperity to the good baroness, may she never feel pain or know distress!"

Miss Lambart having mentioned the ball that was to be given on her birthday, Norah expressed a wish to see her when she was dressed.

“And what is to prevent your seeing me whenever you wish?” asked Miss Lambart; “though I am persuaded you will not like me when I come loaded with jewels, from under the hands of the countess, so well as when I am dressed by Janet; but be sure let me see you in my dressing-room on Thursday morning; I expect I shall be made extravagantly fine; but of this I am certain, I shall be sincerely glad when the shew is over, and I am permitted to dress again according to my own fancy.”

Norah now spoke of the return of lord Conway, and asked when he was expected?

Miss Lambart said, his lordship was expected daily; and the earl and countess spoke with certainty of his arrival before Thursday.

“I heard the earl’s valet say, he was grown very tall and prodigiously handsome,” resumed Norah; “and sure now, I hope he has grown out of his ugly ill-

tempers, and has learned handsome ways. "Look on this scar on my arm, darling," continued she, stripping up her sleeve; "faith and his young lordship set his own mark upon me, sure; he nearly bit the piece out, because I took a whip from him, with which he had given you a cut over the face, which narrowly escaped your eye. But it is wrong, as father Ghallagan says, to remember old grievances, and worse to repeat them, particularly in the present case, when it is said——"

"What is said?" asked Miss Lambart, perceiving that Norah paused and looked confused.

"Oh dear!" replied she, "I ought not to repeat the reports of the village."

"What are the reports?" said Miss Lambart. "Dear mother, you raise my curiosity."

"After all, it may not be true," resumed Norah; "but it is reported lord Conway is coming home to be married."

"I fancy the report is without foundation," said Miss Lambart, "for I have never heard it mentioned."

"Oh then, to be sure, there is never a

word of truth in it, if you have never heard of it; and it is myself that am right—glad to hear you tell me so,” replied Norah; “for sure and sure, darling, I am afraid lord Conway is not of a temper that would make a wife happy; his proud spirit would expect to have every thing his own way; and no wife, let her be ever so complying and gentle, likes to be always contradicted and commanded; it would be sure to break the heart of a meek——But faith now, I hope when lord Conway marries, he will meet his match.”

“I sincerely hope he has reformed his violent temper,” said Miss Lambart; “the honourable Mrs. Chatterton, who met him abroad, speaks very highly of him.”

“I wish she may speak the truth,” returned Norah; “but he was so much cockered by the earl and countess, and taught to think every body beneath him, and never contradicted or corrected when he was a child, that, sure now, I am afraid all his faults have grown along with him, shame to them that did not crush them when he was a child; but he will give

them their hearts full of sorrow, now he is grown up a man."

"Let us hope the best," said Miss Lambart.

"I do hope and pray too," continued Norah; "but my sweet child, suppose lord Conway was to fall in love with you?"

Miss Lambart smiled.—"That is very unlikely," said she; "for you must remember I never was a favourite with him."

"But you are grown upon now," resumed Norah, "as well as his lordship; and when he returns, he may see you with different eyes; and as you are a great heiress, no doubt the earl and countess would have no objection to his making you his wife."

"But I should," replied Miss Lambart; "I should have objections that never could be overcome: but be assured, lord Conway will never make me an offer of his hand."

"I hope to live to see you married," said Norah, "but not to lord Conway: I should be after breaking my heart if you was to consent. Yet if the earl and countess was to press the matter, darling, I do

not see how such a young gentle creature as you——”

“Be assured,” interrupted Miss Lambart, “they would be as much averse to such a marriage as myself. You seem to forget that I am not a Catholic.”

“But they know you are a Christian,” persisted Norah; “and they are certain that you have large estates.”

“Speak no more on the subject, I entreat you,” said Miss Lambart; “the earl and countess of Vandeleur would never countenance, or sanction with approval, a match between persons of different religions; and for myself, I can answer, I never will be the wife of lord Conway.”

The cuckoo-clock, that ornamented a conspicuous place in Norah’s cabin, warned Miss Lambart it was time to be gone; repeating her request that Norah would come to the castle early on Thursday morning, she bade her farewell; and Janet having received some good advice, respecting circumspect and prudent behaviour among the gentlefolks of the second table, followed her young lady across the park.

Stopping under the great oak, Miss Lambart admired the immense size of its trunk, and the wide extent of its gigantic branches, on which the embryo leaf had thickly put forth its pale green buds.—“Three generations,” said Ada, sighing, “have passed away since this oak was planted; the brave and the beautiful have perished from the earth, and still this tree is green and flourishing, and in all probability, will flourish when the present generation shall be “*clods of the valley*.”

While Miss Lambart, full of melancholy reflections, was thinking of her parents, who had in early life pressed the narrow bed, and that, when it pleased Heaven to remove the baroness Wandesford, whose tender and unceasing affection had supplied to her their loss, she should be a desolate orphan, without one being, her foster-mother excepted, sincerely interested for her happiness, Janet, gay, and thoughtless of the future, had been gathering a handful of violets, which she presented to her young lady, observing, at the same time, that two gentlemen, and she thought they

were colonel Lismore and sir Philip Egerton, had just passed through the gate.

“Let us walk on quickly, and avoid them,” said Miss Lambart, “for I am in no mood for idle compliments, and unmeaning flattery.”

Janet could hardly keep up with the swift pace of her mistress; and as she followed, with almost breathless haste, she wondered what harm there could be in compliment and flattery; and thought it vastly odd, and rude too, that her lady should run away from two handsome gentlemen, just as if they were wild beasts.

“Miss Lambart had but just reached her dressing-room, when the countess of Vandeleur requested to see her. Ada was fatigued and flurried with her long walk, and the haste she had made to avoid the gentlemen; but, throwing off her bonnet and shawl, she obeyed the summons, and found the countess arranging a quantity of pearls, diamonds, and other precious stones, in their several cases and caskets.

“Good morning, Miss Lambart,” said the countess, with one of her most gracious smiles; “I hope you rested well, and

are in perfect health?"—Raising her eyes, as Ada replied to her salutation, she exclaimed—"Defend me, child! what is the matter with you? As sure as I exist, you have got the scarletina! was ever any thing so unfortunate! I protest your face is the colour of a crimson peony."

Miss Lambart smiled, and assured the countess she was in perfect health, only had heated herself by walking faster than usual.

"And what could have induced you, Miss Lambart," asked the countess, with a stately and reproachful look, "to put yourself into such a vulgar heat?"

Ada narrated her walk to the village, and that having, on her return, seen the honourable colonel Lismore and sir Philip Egerton, at a distance, she had walked with all the speed she could command to avoid them.

"They must have supposed you were walking for a wager," said the countess. "I am sorry, extremely sorry indeed, they saw you; I really blush to think any person connected with me, or under my pro-

tection, should have been detected in such *canaille* practices. It is well the gentlemen did not overtake you; it would have been shockingly indecorous to have walked with them through the park, with no other female companion than your *soubrette*. Really, Miss Lambart, I am sorry to find you so ill instructed in the usages of *haut ton*; and must recommend you to give up your early morning rambles, for Done-raile Castle is not so secluded as Lisburn Abbey—it is a far different place in every respect.”

The swelling heart of Ada assented to the truth of that observation.

“But if you must have morning walks, Miss Lambart,” resumed the countess, “pray take your footman as well as your maid; a young lady of your rank should not wander about like a gipsy, or expose yourself to being suspected of assignations.”

This was too much, even for the gentle temper of Ada, who, bursting into tears, replied—“No one, madam, will dare to suspect or accuse me of such imprudence; my conduct, I trust, will ever be——”

“Correct and proper, I have no doubt,”

interrupted the countess, artfully changing her look and tone, as she found she had struck a wrong chord, and that Ada had more spirit than she suspected. "Come, come, my dear, compose your spirits, and dry your tears: I beg your pardon for the severity of my speech, which, you may be sure, proceeded entirely from the strength of my affection, and the sincere wish that your youth and inexperience might not lead you to commit errors."

Ada doubted the affection of the countess; but not wishing to appear vindictive or sullen, she endeavoured to suppress her tears, as the countess continued to say—"I was really afraid you had walked yourself into a fever, at a time when I wish you to look particularly captivating; but this, I am happy to perceive, was a groundless apprehension, for the blush-rose has taken place of the crimson peony."

Ada felt offended and unhappy, but she knew she had six months to remain under the surveillance of the countess of Vandeleur; and she felt it her duty to attend to her advice, and submit, with the best grace she could, to her commands.

Endeavouring to conceal her feelings, she took a seat beside the countess, and forced herself to admire the splendid baubles that she recommended to her notice.

“Do you not think they are most elegantly and tastefully set?” asked the countess—“particularly this chaplet of topaz and emeralds—nothing produced by art ever more nearly resembled myrtle and yellow roses; only observe how skilfully the dark and light gems are arranged, to imitate the shades of the flowers.”

“It is very beautiful certainly,” replied Miss Lambart; “but this wreath of jessamine, being more simple, pleases me better.”

“Look at this sprig of cranberries,” said the countess; “the dark green emerald leaves, and the brilliant ruby fruit—I never saw any thing more splendid in my life.”

Miss Lambart having admired the sprig of cranberries, took up a diamond necklace, which being set transparent, she thought extremely elegant.

“And here are earrings to match, set after the fashion of a pair sent as a present to the empress of Russia; this necklace

and the earrings are of themselves a fortune," observed the countess.

"When you wear them," said Miss Lambart, "you will be the queen of diamonds."

"I shall never wear them," replied the countess; "they are not mine; they are yours, my dear."

"Mine!" said Ada: "my dear madam, how can they be mine? I have already seen my mother's diamonds; the baroness Wandesford has them in her care."

"These," resumed the countess, "were also family jewels belonging to your mother, which I have had divested of their clumsy antique settings, and formed into modern and fashionable ornaments; and I trust you will give me some credit for my taste. And now, Miss Lambart," continued the countess, with one of her most fascinating smiles, "as you will indisputably be the queen of diamonds, I trust you will also be the queen of hearts."

"Indeed," replied Ada, "I have no ambition to be either."

"Pardon me, if I say you are a simpleton then," said the countess, "and altogether unlike the rest of our sex, who all

desire to possess wealth, that they may outshine each other, and beauty, which gives them power to rule over the men, who presume to call themselves lords of the creation. But look at this miniature," continued the countess, opening a superb scarlet velvet case, that lay apart from the other ornaments; "do you not think this face very handsome?"

Miss Lambart instantly recognised the haughty features of her cousin Alfred, and replied—"Yes, it certainly is very handsome, and strongly resembles your own."

"I thank you for the compliment," returned the countess, evidently pleased, "and am very happy to find you have not forgotten the countenance of lord Conway."

"His are features not easily forgotten," replied Ada; "though," again looking at the miniature, "they are much altered."

"You mean improved, I hope," said the countess; "the hair and the complexion are indeed much darker than when he left us, and the *tout ensemble* is more manly; his eyes were always admired; they are now so brilliant, they seem to deride the lustre of the diamonds that encircle the

picture: do you not think his eyes particularly beautiful?"

Miss Lambart could excuse the partial feelings of a mother, whose dotting fondness could find beauty in eyes, that were brilliant indeed, but their expression was satanic, and betrayed the unsubdued passions of an evil spirit; but this thought was not to be divulged to the ear of a parent, and she replied—"The eyes are indeed very brilliant."

"*Vous inanimé! petite bégueule!*" thought the countess; but having a point to gain, she merely said, "we shall soon be convinced whether the likeness is correct; for painters, as well as lovers, are too apt to flatter.—Apropos, the honourable colonel Lismore is called a handsome man; what is your opinion, Miss Lambart? I thought he was at some pains to render himself agreeable to you yesterday."

"And he was successful," replied Ada, with perfect *naïveté*; "if it had not been for his polite attention, I should have been very much disconcerted by the strange looks of lady Mazarina Macnamara; every

time I raised my eyes to the opposite side of the table, I found hers fixed upon me, and if I had ever done any thing to offend her, I should have thought with displeasure."

The countess shook her head, and gravely asked—"Does not your conscience accuse you of having done her an injury?"

"Me! no, really," replied Ada, with a look of angelic innocence, mingled with surprise; "Heaven forbid that I should wrong or do injury to any one!"

"This is irresistible!" said the countess, indulging in the vulgarity of a hearty laugh—" *Vous petite criminale!*" exclaimed she; "have not you taken away her lover? is not this sufficient cause to offend her?—did not you, with the witchery of your beauty, seduce from her, and entirely engross, the attentions of the honourable colonel Lismore, and make conquest of his heart, which she, mistaking gallantry for love, believed devoted to her alone?"

"I hope I have not made conquest of his heart," said Ada.

"Are you quite sincere in that hope, Miss Lambart?" asked the countess, fix-

ing her dark penetrating eyes on the face of her niece, who, with perfect composure, answered—"Yes, upon my honour."

"Why, he is of high rank," resumed the artful countess, determined, if possible, to investigate her most secret thoughts; "there is only a sickly consumptive boy between him and a dukedom: to most young women, the honourable colonel Lismore is an object of great interest; he is young, rich, and handsome."

"But not the sort of handsome that pleases me," said Miss Lambart; "and as to his wealth, it is no recommendation in my eyes; he is too assured, too complimentary for my taste. Some author that I have read, says—" *The man who worships his mistress as a divinity, will be apt to consider his wife as less than a woman.*"

The countess of Vandeleur was pleased to find the handsome colonel had made no impression on the heart of her niece, but anxious to prevent the effects of importunity, and the insinuations of flattery, for which he was famous, she expressed herself much gratified at Miss Lambart's de-

claration, because she was sorry to say, the colonel's love of intrigue was notorious; and though she acknowledged he was in many points a desirable alliance, yet it would give her infinite grief to see any one for whom she felt regard, particularly her dear niece, a neglected wife, forsaken for the mere sake of variety, for women without either merit or beauty."

"This, I trust, will never be my case," said Miss Lambart; "but of love or marriage, I am yet too young to think."

"I was married, and a mother," replied the countess, "when I was little more than one year older than you are; and I am proud to say, there are but few happier in the connubial state than the earl of Vandeleur and myself have ever been: may your fate be as felicitous."

"Every person has ideas of their own respecting happiness," thought Ada: "mine must be found with a man of different mind to the earl of Vandeleur, and in pursuits, of which ostentation, pomp, and display, make no part." But the necessity of reply was prevented by Mrs. Blandy, her ladyship's waiting-woman, coming to

receive orders for the trimming a dress, in which the countess intended to astonish her guests at dinner.

“Mercy on me!” exclaimed the countess, stopping short in the middle of her directions respecting the important trimming, “what horrible noise is that? Who can have arrived at this early hour? Was ever polite ears assailed with such barbarous sounds! Go, Blandy, inquire the meaning of this uproar—let me instantly know what can occasion this vulgar noise.”

Miss Lambart having listened to the wish of the countess, that she would mingle some little ornament that day with her dinner-dress, was, to her great relief, suffered to retire; but in a short time the obsequious Mrs. Blandy brought to her dressing-room the caskets of diamonds, with a request from the countess, that she would oblige her by wearing at dinner the jessamine chaplet she had signalized for its chaste simplicity.

Janet suffered her lady’s bell to ring thrice before she attended its summons; and when Miss Lambart asked where she had been, she burst into a laugh, which,

for some time, rendered her incapable of speaking. Seeing Miss Lambart look extremely grave, she begged her pardon ; but protested she could not pass through the hall, for all the dogs belonging to the castle, spaniels, terriers, and pointers, had all collected round lord Nick, and the honourable Mr. Ox.

“ Janet,” said Miss Lambart, with unusual severity, “ I insist that you never, in my presence, call any persons out of their name ; it is an unpardonable liberty for a young woman in your situation to take with your superiors.”

“ Dear bless you, ma’am,” replied Janet, “ I never heard any other name but lord Nick and Mr. Ox ; it was that Mr. Johnstone, my lord’s valet, and Mrs. Blandy, my lady’s woman, called them ; and I am sure I am very sorry, but I knew no better.”

This excuse, true or false, was in Miss Lambart’s opinion an excuse for Janet’s fault ; and she asked what had occasioned the noise she had heard ?

“ Why no wonder, ma’am,” replied Janet, “ that the dogs yelled and barked, for no-

thing was ever seen like my lord—the gentlemen I mean, ma'am, for they had outlandish caps on their heads, made all of fur, with great flaps coming down over their cheeks, and fastened under their chins, and their persons were wrapped in cloaks, made of bear-skins, with the nasty frightful paws hanging to them, at which the dogs pulled and hawled, till at last they threw lord Nick—the old gentleman I mean—down on the hall pavement, and Mr. Ox—I beg pardon, ma'am, the young gentleman—in trying to raise his lordship up, fell sprawling over him; and what with the barking of the dogs, the swearing of the gentlemen, and the laughing of the servants, there was no such thing as hearing your bell, ma'am.”

“I hope the gentlemen are not hurt,” said Miss Lambart.

“Not much, I believe, ma'am,” replied Janet; “for hearing the uproar, that handsome colonel, and sir Philip Egerton, came and assisted to help them up, for the servants had enough to do to keep off the dogs; and I heard the old lord say he was not so much hurt as alarmed, for he ex-

pected to be torn to pieces and devoured by the dogs, like another Nactean, though he was not peeping at Dinah bathing."

Miss Lambart smiled.

"And then Mr.——his nephew I think he called him, said, that he believed he had escaped with whole bones; but his nerves were all in a twitter, and he must take some drops, and lie down for an hour to recover himself; la, Miss Lambart, it was so funny to hear a great tall man, with a face as round and as big as a harvest-moon, talk about taking drops, and lying down to recover himself: the handsome colonel turned to the hall door to laugh; and sir Philip Egerton advised him to send for a doctor and be bled."

"This was a scene you ought not to have been present at," said Miss Lambart.

"Why there was Mrs. Millefleur, and Mrs. Sprucely, and Mrs. Blandy, present, ma'am," replied Janet, "and I thought there was no more harm for me than them."

"And the handsome colonel, as you call him," resumed Miss Lambart, "has a name."

"Oh dear, yes, ma'am, I know he has."

“ If you know his name,” said Miss Lambart, gravely, “ why do you not make use of it, when you take occasion to speak of him ? ”

“ Why, because they never call him any thing but the handsome colonel in the housekeeper’s parlour, ma’am,” replied Janet ; “ and Mrs. Sprucely says—— ”

“ What I have no wish to hear,” interrupted Miss Lambart : “ I am very sorry to find, Janet, that the warning I gave you before we quitted Lisburn Abbey, has already escaped your memory, as it obliges me to repeat to you, if you wish to retain your present situation, you must be careful to avoid examples of pertness and folly, which I can never tolerate. It is not prudent in young women to make observations on the persons of gentlemen at all, but particularly those who are so very much above their own sphere.”

“ Why, la, Miss Lambart, a cat may look at a king, as the saying is ; and if a gentleman is very handsome,” said Janet, “ one can never be expected to keep one’s eyes shut, as if one was blind ; and sure

there can be no great harm in just saying a gentleman is handsome."

"But there would be harm, Janet," returned Miss Lambart, "if it should, by any chance, get to the gentleman's ears, and he should, in consequence of your having expressed a favourable opinion of his person, take the liberty of making proposals, that it would be unbecoming in him to offer, and you to receive."

"If the greatest man in all Ireland was to make me unbecoming offers," said Janet, colouring like scarlet, "I would teach him his distance. No, dear Miss Lambart, I will never slight your good advice—I will never bring shame upon myself, or my dear mother—no, not for all the riches, or the handsome men, in the world."

"I believe you, Janet," replied Miss Lambart; "but it is right to appear good and virtuous, as well as to be so in reality; but you are too giddy and volatile, and being of an easy, unreflecting temper, will be apt to be led astray by the opinions and actions of others; to avoid which, I recommend you to pass as little of your time

as you can help in the housekeeper's parlour; for be assured, the manners and conversation you will meet there, will neither improve your mind nor your morals."

As usual, Janet made fair promises; but the merry idle life led by the ladies and gentlemen of the second table, their jokes, and scandalous tales, were so attractive, that she could not bring herself to mope alone in Miss Lambart's dressing-room; while the housekeeper's parlour outvied the countess of Vandeleur's drawing-room in affectation, folly, and flattery.

Miss Lambart, in compliance with the wish of the countess Vandeleur, confined her redundant raven tresses with the jessamine chaplet, which obliged her to wear necklace and earrings of corresponding gems, to the great delight of Janet, who, while fastening the clasps of her bracelets, said, she was now dressed like a lady, and a rich heiress, which every body knew she was.

"These circumstances being established," replied Miss Lambart, "there is no occasion for these baubles."

"Yes, but there is though," persisted

Janet, "because you can afford to wear real diamonds."

"No one, surely, would be so silly as to decorate their persons with false ones," said Miss Lambart.

"Dear me, Miss Lambart," returned Janet, "do you suppose Miss Obrien wears real earnest diamonds?"

"Certainly—I do not suppose otherwise."

"You may depend, ma'am, you are mistaken," said Janet; "Miss Obrien sticks herself out with sprigs, and necklaces, and bracelets, and rings, and not one of them are real jewels, only but a parcel of coloured stones and cut glass, that she bought at Paris, just a sham, to make a glitter with, and impose upon people."

"Janet, Janet," replied Miss Lambart, "do not repeat such improbable nonsense; no lady would wear trinkets and ornaments that are not real."

"Miss Obrien's fine ornaments are all sham, however," persisted Janet; "Mrs. Millefleur shewed me the bill for I do not know how many fine trinkets purchased

at Paris, among which was a gold watch and chain, and the whole did not amount to more than sixty-five pounds; and I remember the watch and chain the baroness gave you, ma'am, cost a hundred pounds; and I dare say the diamonds you have now on, are worth more than all Miss O'Brien's fortune."

Not wishing to encourage Janet in exposing Miss O'Brien's folly and vanity, Ada sent her to inquire whose carriage she had seen enter the gates, just as she sat down to dress; during the absence of her *soubrette*, she reflected on the idle vanity of Miss O'Brien, whose fortune she had heard was small, and consequently not equal to the purchase of expensive ornaments—"If she prized the glittering baubles as little as I do," said Ada, as her eye glanced on the full-length mirror before which she stood, she would never expose herself to the ridicule of her servant, by wearing false jewels."

Never did the glossy ringlets of Ada look more beautiful than at the present moment, surmounted by the chaplet composed of emeralds and diamonds, though

her own simple taste would have preferred a string or two of pearls, or a single comb, to all the costly adornments that glittered on her person.

While Miss Lambart regarded the lovely image reflected by her mirror without vanity or exultation, the countess of Vandeleur, with the utmost solicitude, was endeavouring to restore to her person the bloom and grace of youth ; and having at length completed the task to her own satisfaction, and the great relief of Mrs. Blandy, she sallied forth in all the pride of fashionable elegance ; and just as she entered Miss Lambart's dressing room, Janet announced the arrival of the earl and countess of Drogheda, with lady Juliana Corry, their daughter.

“ The history of this new-made earl from the Ganges, is not without interest,” said the countess ; “ but I have not time to relate it : they are sprung from the very dregs of the *canaille*, and are invited here merely as lions ; though I understand they have brought home bushels of double mohrs, and lacks of yellow star pagodas : but though wealth is the *passé par tout*

to society of the highest order, I," continued the countess, drawing herself up with an air of hauteur, "I detest such vulgar associates; I look for patrician descent, and think it necessary that my acquaintance should be persons of family."

Miss Lambart knew that the honourable Mrs. Chatterton was the granddaughter of a butcher; but she listened in silence, as the countess continued to say—"But the earl had some reason of his own—a political one, I suppose—for wishing them to be invited, and so, like a dutiful wife, I obeyed: and now, if you please, I will have the honour of introducing you to the strange animals lately imported from Bengal."

On their entering the drawing-room, the earl of Vandeleur advanced, and taking Miss Lambart's hand, introduced her to the earl of Cloghnickelty, a little, shrivelled, dark-complexioned old man, who, having a cork leg, was necessitated to walk with a crutch, and though remarkably thin, and a martyr to gout and asthma, affected robust health, wished to be thought young, and to possess a strong constitution.

Lord Cloghnickelty smiled, bowed, and presented his nephew, the honourable Mr. Oxmantown, who, with the form of a colossus, huge, strong, and bony, a broad unmeaning face, purple with health, round, staring, greenish-coloured eyes, and immense yellow teeth, believed himself an absolute Adonis, fancied he had weak nerves, and though possessed of Stentorian lungs, always spoke in a tone scarcely a note above a whisper ; while his uncle, whose voice was “ *turning again to childish treble, piped and whistled in his sound,*” endeavoured to speak, and laugh loud, and to persuade himself and others, that he had lungs and nerves of iron ; but these were men of aristocratic pedigrees, and could boast their nobility as far back as Niell Naighwallach, and on that account welcome guests to the earl and countess of Vandeleur, who considered, that being of ancient family, gave a right to be ridiculous and disagreeable.

‘The honourable Mr. Oxmantown opened his large round green eyes, beyond their usual staring dimensions, when the earl of Vandeleur introduced him to Miss

Lambart; and he was so charmed with her beauty and timidity, that he experienced no little regret, as he recollected that he had given his uncle, on whom he was in great measure dependant, a promise to marry lady Indiana Corry, to whose charms he felt perfectly indifferent: every glance he cast on Miss Lambart increasing his approbation, he thought his uncle extremely unreasonable to fetter his choice, merely because the earl of Drogheda many years ago had saved his life: to be sure, if he refused the girl, old Cork-toe might take it into his head to marry her himself, and she might provide him an heir, and then good bye to the title, and all future expectations: these were considerations of weight sufficient to give his present inclinations pause, and make him rather resolve to humour the whim of old Cloghnickelty, than by opposing, end his present hope of title and incalculable wealth, for lady Indiana Corry was an only child, and would have, it was reported, her own weight in gold and diamonds.

A short time before the announcement

of dinner, the earl and countess of Drogheda, with their daughter, lady Indiana Corry, made their appearance in the drawing-room, when having been introduced to the honourable Mrs. Chatterton, Miss Obrien, and Miss Lambart, to whom they were strangers, they seated themselves, and without any of the *mauvaise honte* that embarrasses persons newly elevated to rank, and placed in society superior to that they had formerly moved in, they joined in the passing conversation; the earl of Drogheda talked of the state of Ireland, with the gentlemen; and if he did not evince any very profound intellect, he gave proof of a generous and feeling heart, by declaring his intention to devote a large portion of his wealth to the relief of his distressed countrymen, and his resolve to live among them, that being the most efficient means he could think of to better the condition of the poor on his own estate—"And I wish, with all my soul," said he, "I could prevail on every Irish gentleman of property to make his home in his own country; sure then we should soon get quit of those two ugly murder-

ing thieves, poverty and rebellion ; and little Erin would be the happiest, as she is the beautifullest spot in all the world."

While this patriotic conversation was carried on by the gentlemen, lady Indiana Corry had placed herself by Miss Lambart, who was much interested by her lively remarks, and the unpretending frankness and simplicity of her manner ; at the same time, lady Drogheda was filling the other ladies with envy, by informing them that the dress she had then on was made of real Cashmere shawls, that cost at Bengal twenty-five double mohrs a-piece ; and that her turban had been presented to her by a princess of the Burman empire, whose daughter's-husband, the raja Jumman Said Hassan Ram Chund, had sent her two birds of paradise, and a diamond butterfly, with a ruby in each wing worth seven hundred double mohrs.

"A princely present indeed !" said Miss Obrien, surveying with envious glances the rich adornments of the little yellow figure, who seemed to have no greater pleasure than boasting of her wealth.—

“ When the old raja, Johiel Ram Chund, was taken prisoner by my husband, the earl of Drogheda,” resumed the little loquacious countess, “ all his camp equipage and private treasures fell into our hands; and sure his chairs were carved out of ivory, and all inlaid with gold faith; and all his eating and drinking utensils were of the same precious metal; and the large bowl that the old soul washed his hands in was of gold, and the rim set all round with diamonds sure; it was my own self that filled it with rack-punch, on lady Indiana’s birthday, a fortnight before we left Calcutta.”

“ The golden bowl then was in the earl’s share of the plunder,” observed Mrs. Chatterton.

“ Yes, ma’am,” replied lady Drogheda; “ and the ivory chairs, and best part of the dishes and cups, into the bargain.”

“ What astonishing good fortune!” exclaimed the countess of Vandeleur, as she thought how rapidly lord Drogheda had acquired rank and wealth.

“ Why, to be sure, nobody can go to deny but the earl of Drogheda, my hus-

band, has been a fortunate man," replied her ladyship; "but faith sure, every body knows he deserved it, for, great luck to his courage, he was no flincher—he never was after turning his back to the enemy."

"He did not expose his life for nothing, it appears," observed Miss O'Brien, spitefully.

"Sorrow to the hearts of them that would have let him!" said her ladyship. "But no, ma'am, a share of the plunder was my husband's, the earl of Drogheda's, right, and he had it sure—a cimeter and belt, belonging to the conquered raja, all covered with diamonds and precious stones, of every sort and size; and his war elephant, the trappings of which were valued at fifty thousand mohrs, and all his camp equipage, worth a hundred thousand more. Yes," continued her ladyship, stretching up her long yellow neck, "my husband, the earl of Drogheda, had his share of the plunder, long life and great prosperity to him, and every brave soldier! He has been always fortunate, even from a child. In the last battle, every man in the regiment said he fought like a lion; and if it

had not been for his taking the raja prisoner, the British would have lost half their possessions in India. Och sure, and I hope I shall never see a camp again, or smell gunpowder; for in the last skirmish, my husband, the earl of Drogheda, got several shocking wounds, and they were so long healing, that sure and sure, I was afraid he would have died, and left me a widow."

"You would have had plenty of wealth to console you," said Miss Obrien.

"Faith sure, and you are quite out there," replied her ladyship; "no, ma'am, I beg your pardon—though I should have had riches in plenty, that would have been but a poor sort of consolation to my sorrow: but great luck to Denis O'Reily; may he never want a thirteener! Och sure, and he is a jewel of a surgeon; he gave him true attendance, and healed his wounds; and the governor of India, and all the great ginerals and officers, were proud to visit, and take my husband, the earl of Drogheda, by the hand, though he was not a nobleman then; but when he was ordered to England for his health, the king himself, long life to his gracious ma-

jesty ! sent for my husband to court, and made him earl of Drogheda, and complimented him on his brave conduct."

" I wonder such honours did not turn your brain," said the honourable Mrs. Chatterton.

" There was no danger of that sure," returned lady Drogheda, " if I could bear the troubles and hardships, and go through the dangers I did in India, without going crazy : but of all my trials, coming away from Calcutta was the worst ; for I lived in greater pomp and grandeur there than I can any how in this country ; but my husband, the earl of Drogheda, did not find India agree with him ; and so here we are, but sorrow a bit do I like Dublin."

" Indeed ! well really that is strange," remarked the countess of Vandeleur. " I thought it was your native place ?"

" No ; I was born at Kilkenny," replied lady Drogheda. " But I like India better than I do Ireland ; and faith sure, not without reason, for I have not half the respect paid me here that I had there."

" The respect paid to her wealth, the vulgar ignorant woman fancied was offer-

ed to her person," whispered Miss O'Brien to the honourable Mrs. Chatterton, as the announcement of dinner put an end to lady Drogheda's regrets after the pomps and luxuries of India.

The countess of Vandeleur kept a French cook, and his condiments of various kinds were considered superlative; but lady Drogheda, accustomed to the curries, kewabs, pillaws, and hot spicery of the east, found nothing seasoned high enough for her palate, and she offered to send for her sirdar bowberjee, or head cook, to instruct the countess of Vandeleur's mounseer in making and preparing dishes after the fashion of India—mulligatawnies and mangoleirs. Her ladyship also lamented the difficulty of procuring ortolan pies, Manilla jellies, and Chinese sweetmeats and preserves, all which she used to have every day at tiffin.

"Luncheon, you mean; speak that your friends may understand you, Kathleen," said her husband, good-naturedly; "and though we cannot procure those superfluities very easily here, yet recollect and be thankful, that we have also left be-

hind us as many serious annoyances, for instance, the excessive heat."

"Why, to be sure, that was very bad to bear," replied her ladyship; "though I always sat under the punkah*, and had my ayah† and chaprassy‡ on each side of me, with feather fans, dipped in jutumansi§ essence, and Persian|| attur gul; but for all that, I used to perspire till my clothes would be as wet as if I was dipped in a pond."

The ladies looked at each other and blushed.

Miss O'Brien, casting a contemptuous glance on the Drogheda trio, said, in a low voice, to sir Philip Egerton—" *Quelle canaille!*"

"And the moschettos, Kathleen; remember your old plagues, the moschettos," said the earl of Drogheda.

"Sure now and I shall never be after forgetting the devils, bad luck to their bites and stings," replied her ladyship, in the true Irish accent; "faith now, when I followed the camp the last time, och sure, I thought they would have taken my two

I. 3

* A swinging machine, to circulate air. † Waiting woman.
‡ Footman. § Indian nard. || Commonly called otto of roses.

eyes out of my head; and the night we had our bivouac over against the jungle, I was blistered from head to toe; and faith that was not all the trouble I went through, for that very same night a tiger carried off a woman from under a tree, not ten yards off where my own self was lying."

Every eye was turned on the speaker with intense interest.

"Sure now and it is true enough," resumed her ladyship; "and if I had not roused the sentinel, who, sorrow to his neglect of duty, was sleeping on his post, nobody knows but myself and little Indy, who was tied up in my apron, and fast asleep, poor babe, might have been devoured next."

"What a fearful situation!" said Miss Lambart, shuddering.

"Sure and you may say that, Miss," continued lady Drogheda; "it was fearful enough to hear the jackalls, and lions, and tigers, howling on one side of you, and the serpents hissing on the other; and though tired with a long march, not daring to sleep, for fear, when you woke, you should find yourself in the maw of some

wild animal; and then, to march over mountains, and deserts, and plains, with the sun roasting you, and the sand blinding and choking you, and not so much as a drop of water to drink."

"Bless me!" exclaimed Mrs. Chatterton, "what strong constitutions some people must have, to go through such hardships and fatigues!"

"And has your ladyship endured all this?" asked Miss Lambart, in a voice of the tenderest sympathy.

"Ay, by holy saint Patrick, has she," replied the earl of Drogheda; "she has been a faithful wife and a brave comrade, ever ready, when the drum beat, to march where we were ordered. Och, the creature! she has shared in all my hardships and in all my glory; sure, and if it had not been for her care, and the love she had for me, I should have been left among the dead on the field of battle; once, when a chokedar* belonging to the raja Johiel Rum Chund had got me down, and was about to plunge his dagger in my throat, the soul that sits there was after striking

* A soldier.

him such a blow on the head, as stunned him, and gave me an opportunity to recover my legs, and the weapon that had fallen from my hand."

"To be sure, and I have seen and had my share in many of them sort of skirmishes," observed her ladyship; "and what else could I expect when I married a soldier, and took him for better and for worse; and saint Patrick knows, we have had many a wearisome march together; and it is myself that knows what I felt, when I saw him cutting his way through the enemy's ranks; but it is all over now, and sure I hope I will never see another field of battle; but, to be sure, it is not likely, for my husband, the earl of Drogheda," drawing up her crane neck proudly, is now a burrowbahader*, all through his own valour and merit, and I am free to enjoy myself, after all my hardships and dangers, in peace and in war, by land and by sea; and sure I shall never forget the gay life I had at Calcutta, after my husband was made a colonel: there was the ladies of the civil list visiting me, with

* A nobleman.

their chaprassys in liveries covered over with broad gold lace, and carrying silver sticks in their hands—and all the officers' wives coming in their palanquins to my bungalow*: faith, sure, and I shall never forget to remember what a delightful place I had to live in, standing in the middle of groves of oranges, and limes, and dates, and figs, and shrubs, and flowers, all looking so beautiful, and smelling so sweet; sure now, there is neither fruit nor flowers in Ireland to compare with them."

"I am very glad we are here though," replied lord Drogheda; "there is no place in the world like green Erin for me; I do not deny, Kathleen, that your bungalow was a very pretty place; but never fear, jewel, we shall have as pleasant a country-house here—every thing is to be had for money in Ireland sure; and if the fruit and flowers will not grow out in the open air, why we must build hot-houses, and green-houses, and I dare say we shall be after raising oranges, and pine-apples, and grapes, as well as our neighbours; and we can collect curious plants and flowers, as

* Country-house.

they do, from all parts of the world. Och, by saint Patrick! it grieves me to hear you despise your own country, Kathleen; it is a beautiful, fertile, generous spot of earth; bad luck to the spalpeens that have deserted it; but sorrow to my heart whenever I am ashamed to own myself an Irishman. I love every bog in it—and prefer a potatoe dug out of my native soil, to all the foreign fruits in the world.”

“I honour your patriotic feelings, my good friend,” said the earl of Vandeleur, “and most sincerely participate in them, and will drink the wish nearest and dearest to every Irishman’s heart—‘*Erin go bragh*.”

The gentlemen filled their glasses to the brim, and the ladies touched the sparkling wine with their coral lips.

When the countess of Vandeleur led the way to her superb drawing-room, she learned that the baroness Ormsby and lady Stella Savage were arrived.—“I have not seen the lady Stella since her return from England,” said the countess to her friend, the honourable Mrs. Chatterton, who followed her like her shadow: “report says, she is very beautiful, and that the gentle-

men have named her *la belle savage*. Now only conceive the delight I feel, besides the eclat I shall obtain, by having three goddesses under my roof at the same time."

The honourable Mrs. Chatterton understood the countess *au pied de la lettre*, and repeated—"Goddesses!—purchases, I suppose, made by lord Conway in Italy; I recollect hearing him say he was in treaty for some antique statues, but I did not know——"

The laugh of the countess made Mrs. Chatterton suspect that she had misunderstood her meaning, which was instantly confirmed by her saying—"The goddesses I allude to are lady Stella Savage, Miss Lambart, and Miss Obrien; but here comes the baroness Ormsby, as unwieldy as ever. Mercy upon us! what a size she is! and nothing can be in worse taste than her ruby velvet dress; it shews her clumsy figure in all its awkward disproportion."

"I declare she looks like a porpoise!"

"A porpoise!" repeated the countess; "the comparison is far too diminutive; she is more like a huge whale, floundering about; and her niece, lady Stella, with

that veil floating round her slim form, intends to look a sylph. But mum," said she, composing her countenance, and advancing to meet the baroness, who, toiling under a load of flesh, was gasping and panting with the exertion she made to reach the upper end of the drawing-room, where the countess of Vandeleur was stationed.—" My dear baroness, I rejoice to see you looking so well, and to have the pleasure of bidding you welcome to Done-raile Castle.—Lady Stella Savage, the fame of your beauty has outrun your arrival," said the fashionable, elegant hostess, extending her white hand, with a smile that persuaded her guests she was sincere in her professions of regard and welcome.

The baroness Ormsby, unable to articulate, smiled and nodded, and dropping on a *fauteuil*, that groaned with her weight, left it to lady Stella Savage to pay their mutual compliments, *selon le costume*, while she recovered breath and speech.

To rank and wealth the countess of Vandeleur never failed in attention, and all outward demonstrations of respect ; and if her professions and smiles were hollow and

insincere, what did it signify? those whom she deceived were heartless as herself, and equally culpable; for they, in their turn, imposed upon others. The baroness Ormsby possessed both rank and wealth; she was, of course, a guest to whom the countess of Vandeleur was liberal to excess of prevencances and flatteries, which, though actually meaning nothing, were received by the weak-headed baroness as the genuine effusions of a most sincere friendship.

Lady Drogheda, who a short time before had met the baroness and her niece at one of the viceroy's balls, now pushed her little spare figure between the countess of Vandeleur and the honourable Mrs. Chatterton, and not considering any further introduction necessary, hoped that the baroness Ormsby was quite recovered, and felt herself better than when she had last the pleasure of seeing her.

The baroness looked disconcerted. The countess repeated—"Recovered! I never should have suspected you had been ill, from your present good looks. My dear baroness, have you been seriously indisposed? How unkind, to keep your friends

in the dark, on a subject so interesting to their feelings !”

“ I assure you, countess, I have not been ill,” returned the baroness ; “ this lady saw me a little overcome at the vice-roy’s ball, which was excessively crowded.”

“ Faith and you may say that,” said lady Drogheda ; “ it was enough to overcome any one—such squeezing, and pushing, and treading upon heels and toes ; bad manners to them, I thought I should have been suffocated in passing to the drawing-room from the entrance-chamber, between the big paunches of lord Antrim and general Ryan. Och, sure it was myself believed I was being squeezed to death between two feather-beds.”

The countess of Vandeleur secretly enjoyed the mortification of the baroness Ormsby, to whom she knew any allusions to corpulency were particularly disagreeable ; and the honourable Mrs. Chatterton, with all her studied *bienseance*, was near giving way to a hearty laugh, as lady Drogheda continued—“ And sure I have got a corn on my big toe, and Miss Butler trod upon it as heavy as a dray-horse.

Faith, and I felt it for a week after; and thin as I am, I thought to myself—lady Drogheda, thinks I, you will be killed sure, with this heat; and what a stew must the baroness Ormsby be in, with all her big load of fat!”

Nothing could possibly have been more offensive to the baroness than this observation; and she pettishly replied, she did not suffer any inconvenience from her *embon point*.

“Inconvenience!” repeated lady Drogheda; “sure and you must have suffered great inconvenience, not being able to get so much as a mouthful of air; it is very unfortunate to be so monstrous fat, because you are not able to use your legs and arms like us thin folks, who are supple-jointed and active.”

The baroness sat swelling with rage, which the countess of Vandeleur endeavoured to allay, by observing—“What the baroness wants in agility is amply compensated by dignity.”

“Dignity is it you mean?” returned lady Drogheda. “Och, sure, dignity is a grand thing; but it is myself, faith, that

would rather have the use of my limbs. Och musha, good luck to that same dignity; but, to my mind, it is not worth a single marvide, for it will not prevent one being squeezed to death in a crowd, or stifled for want of air, as was nearly the case with the baroness at the viceroy's ball. Lady Indiana Corry and myself contrived to get upon a marble table, where we stood till the shoving and elbowing was over, and the coast was clear, and then I was informed that the baroness Ormsby had lost one of her shoes, and half the curls off her wig, and was bruised, and stifled, and——”

“Not a word of truth in the report!” exclaimed the enraged baroness—“a fabrication of most scandalous falsehoods, as lady Stella Savage can witness.”

“To be sure I can,” replied the young lady, who having only heard a word here and there of the conversation, had no knowledge of what she appeared so ready to witness; but that did not signify—the orphan Stella was entirely dependent on the baroness, and she knew her own interest too well to contradict her assertions, or

maintain an opinion opposite to her way of thinking.

Lady Stella had been complimenting and receiving compliments from lady Indiana Corry, Miss Lambart, and Miss O'Brien, and was only sensible that lady Drogheda had highly offended her aunt, by reminding her that she was immensely fat, for which unpardonable rudeness, lady Stella understood her cue was to behave to the offender with distance and contempt. Miss O'Brien affecting to be cold, wrapped herself in her shawl, and reclining on an ottoman, surveyed the features, figure, and dress of *la belle savage*, with half-closed eyes, yet sufficiently open to convince her, that her own beauty would suffer no eclipse from being placed near lady Stella's, whose *nez troussée*, in her opinion, gave an air of vulgarity to her face, that was not redeemed by a dead-white complexion, large grey eyes, coal-black hair, and fine teeth.

The pertinacious countess of Drogheda having exhausted the subject of the viceroy's crowded ball, and finding it impossible to bring the baroness Ormsby to con-

fess her superabundance of flesh an inconvenience, took her daughter's arm, and walking with her to a distant part of the room, began a theme most disagreeable to the ear of her youthful auditor—the praise of Mr. Oxmantown. Indiana was aware that Lord Cloghnickelty and her parents were projecting to bring about a match between them; but she had seen a person she liked better; indeed, she particularly disliked Mr. Oxmantown, and resolved never to marry him.

“Indy, my jewel, why did not you take Mr. Oxmantown's arm when he offered it?” asked her ladyship; “and why did you refuse to sit next him at dinner?”

“Because I hate him,” replied Indiana, “with his whispering voice, and his weak nerves, and his great ugly eyes.”

“But, Indy, darling, you ought not to set yourself against him,” resumed her ladyship, “for he is greatly in love with you.”

“With the earl of Drogheda's mohrs and rupees,” said Indiana.

“Faith now, and you are quite out there,” replied lady Drogheda; “it is your own sweet pretty face he is in love with.”

“ I shall never be in love with his. It is a great pity he was born a gentleman,” continued Indiana.

“ And why, pray ?” asked her ladyship ; “ sure now he is a fine well-built man.”

“ Excellently well built for a chairman or a porter,” observed lady Indiana ; “ but he has neither the look, the gait, nor the voice, to please me, and so I will tell him, the very first time he speaks of love to me.”

“ Sure now, and if you do,” said lady Drogheda, “ you will get confined to your chamber, and be kept upon bread and water till your spirit comes down, and you agree to take the husband we have chose for you.”

“ And if I am locked up in my chamber,” replied Indiana, “ I will jump out of the window.”

“ Faith, then you will be after breaking your bones, jewel, and your little neck.”

“ And breaking your heart, and my father’s too,” said Indiana ; “ but I am sure you love me too well, to urge me to so dreadful an expedient.”

• The reply lady Drogheda would have made was prevented by the entrance of

the gentlemen, when her ladyship taking her husband aside, began repeating to him her daughter's dislike of Mr. Oxmantown.

“By St. Patrick, if she does not like him, there is an end of the business,” said the warm-hearted Drogheda: “faith, I respect and esteem my friend Cloghnickelty and his nephew; but I love my girl in my heart's core; and sure, if I must be after speaking the truth of my mind, he is but a poor weak soul, for all his big bones, sorrow to his faint voice, and his weak nerves, that same Mr. Oxmantown: but, Kathleen, my honey darling, do not you be after interfering and advising; let Indy alone to act as she likes; and then you know, my jewel, if she refuses him, Cloghnickelty cannot be offended with me; for he can never expect me to be such a Turk as to force my girl to marry a man she does not like; and if he does, bad luck to me if I would not rather never see the face of him again, than vex the heart of my little Indy, and draw tears from her pretty eyes; no, by St. Patrick, Kathleen, if Oxmantown was a king, she should not marry him, if she did not like him.”

While the earl of Drogheda was thus expressing his parental feelings and sentiments, Mr. Oxmantown was urged by his uncle to join lady Indiana Corry; but during the time he paused to deliberate on what he should say to her, she perceiving him look in the direction of where she stood, darted under the drapery of the window, and placed herself behind colonel Lismore, who was standing near Miss Lambart.

"Hide me," said the little romp, "for goodness sake, hide me."

"From whom—of what are you afraid, lady Indiana?" asked Miss Lambart, smiling at her crouching posture.

"From whom are you hiding?" said the colonel, placing himself before her as she requested.

"From old Nick and his ox," replied lady Indiana; "I was once nearly trampled under the feet of an elephant, but, bless your soul, I should soon have been killed and put out of misery, and then, you know, there would have been an end of the affair; but if I once get into the

power of old Nick and his ox, I may be tormented with hoofs and horns, for nobody knows how many long years."

"If you marry Mr. Oxmantown," returned the colonel, laughing, "it is not impossible but horns may obtrude between you; but I do not understand your allusion to hoofs."

"Look at his big ugly feet," whispered lady Indiana; "here he comes with his great staring eyes. Do not let him come near me, dear colonel," continued she, throwing her lace frock over her head, and crouching down to the ground.

"Oh, mighty pretty! very well, lady Indiana!" exclaimed the wheezing voice of lord Cloghnickelty, who had caught a glimpse of her as she popped down behind the colonel. "It is all fair and quite proper, as I tell Mr. Oxmantown, that young ladies should be sought after; he is a little diffident of his own powers of pleasing, but nothing can speak plainer in his favour than this *ruse d'amour*, this invitation to a game at hide and seek. What are you pondering about, you block-

head?" said he, slapping his nephew on the shoulder.

"Why I am thinking," replied the honourable Mr. Oxmantown, "that I may intrude, and that lady Indiana——"

"Will call you an ass," interrupted old Cloghnickelty, "if you do not ferret her out of that corner. Don't provoke me, you puppy, with your thinking, and your weak nerves, and all the rest of your confounded nonsense, but take the hint that is thrown out to you."

Thus urged by his uncle, the honourable Mr. Oxmantown advanced a few steps, and in a faint voice said, endeavouring to get behind him—"With your permission, colonel Lismore, I must—that is, I beg leave to search for lady Indiana Corry, who is, I believe, hid somewhere hereabout."

"Your pardon, sir," replied the colonel; "I most certainly shall oppose your intention, unless you can produce proper authority for your search."

"Pooh! plague confound it, colonel, this is carrying the joke too far," said lord Cloghnickelty; "Mr. Oxmantown has my

authority, and the earl of Drogheda's authority, to seek, woo, and win lady Indiana Corry, for the purpose and intent of making her his wife."

"But he has not my authority," said lady Indiana, popping her little head under colonel Lismore's arm, and throwing back her sunny ringlets from her ivory forehead; "to be sure you have found my hiding-place, but you are never the nearer for that; for though lord Cloghnickelty, and lord Drogheda, and lady Drogheda, say yes, Mr. Oxmantown can never make a wife of me as long as I say no."

"Indy, Indy, honey, what is it you are after saying?" asked lady Drogheda, who with sir Philip Egerton had now joined the group; "but pray excuse her, my lord, for she was always given to be joking and teasing. Indy is a spoilt child, sure; but though she has been over indulged by my husband, the earl of Drogheda, yet it is myself that will take upon me to say, there is not a sweeter-tempered soul living, nor one that is more asy to be persuaded; and for all she says no, she will sing another tune by and by, the darling creature!

So, Mr. Oxmantown, take a bit of advice along with you; do not be cast down; keep up a good heart, for faith sure, I said no many times to my husband, the earl of Drogheda, before he coaxed me into the humour to say yes."

"Quite proper," returned lord Cloghnickelty; "the fair sex all expect importunity; I have told my nephew so a thousand times. The ladies, George, said I, all love attention; I speak from experience; I have always found they expect to be flattered, and followed, and courted, and they take delight in plaguing their lovers, I know they do; no person is more competent to speak upon this subject than myself." Here a fit of coughing seized the vain old man, and it was some time before he was able to articulate—"The fair sex always pretend to dislike what they approve, and to scorn and refuse what they intend to accept."

"That may be the fashion in Ireland," said lady Indiana; "but if it is, I am glad I was born in India, and not among such deceitful people. But once for all, I tell you, my lord, I never will——"

“Hush, Indy, my darling,” interrupted lady Drogheda; “recollect what your governess told you about discovering your mind to people, and you know what she says must be right, for sure you know she was recommended by the bishop——”

“I wonder,” interrupted Indiana, hastily, “if the bishop taught her it was right to say one thing, and mean another; if he did, I would not give a pin for his religion; but though it may suit the purposes and situation of Miss O’Leary to tell fibs, I think it would be very unbecoming and improper in me, and I will now and always speak my mind.”

“Faith now and you are after behaving mighty ungenteel, my jewel,” said lady Drogheda, drawing up her long yellow neck, and trying to look grand, “sure I shall advise my husband, the earl of Drogheda, to hold a tighter rein over you, lady Indiana Corry, for sorrow the worse you would be for a little less liberty.”

“Pray,” replied Indiana, putting her little white hands together, and smiling archly, “pray do not advise papa to confine me to my chamber, for if he does, I

shall certainly hazard my neck, by jumping out of the window."

"I trust I shall be passing by at the time," said colonel Lismore, "that I may have the happiness of preventing any accident, by catching you in my arms."

"Lady Indiana inherits the spirit of her father," observed sir Philip Egerton.

"Spirit!" murmured Mr. Oxmantown; "she has too much spirit by half."

"And you, puppy," said lord Clogh-nickelty, "you have far too little: confound your weak nerves and your quivering voice! the girl despises you; a fellow with the big bones and the muscles of a giant, why, you ought to be as brave as Cæsar, and bear the same motto—'*Veni, vidi, vici*;' instead of which, you have not the spirit of a mouse."

"The Curry will improve it," observed lady Stella Savage, who, having taken a seat near Miss Lambart, overheard the latter part of the conversation.

"I beg leave to correct a trifling mistake," said sir Philip Egerton—"the name is Corry, not Curry."

"No matter," resumed lady Stella; "the

young lady appears to have plenty of cayenne, and other pungent spices, in her composition, all which will be necessary to enliven the dull, insipid, heavy Oxmantown."

"The honourable gentleman does not appear to be a favourite of yours," said sir Philip.

"He will never have to answer for the sin of breaking female hearts," replied lady Stella; "I have often heard matrimony called a pill; but not all the gilding his uncle, old Cloghnickelty, could cover it with, would induce me to swallow it with Mr. Oxmantown."

Lady Drogheda and her daughter being out of hearing, lady Stella declared she enjoyed the rich brogue of the earl and countess, and wondered how the daughter had so completely escaped it.

"I really envy the old woman her splendid dress," said Miss Obrien; "then her assumption of the fine lady is a most exquisite caricature; for that vulgar brogue of hers will always betray her low breeding, though she carries a fortune on her back."

“ Her daughter,” rejoined colonel Lis-
more, “ is a bewitching little fairy.”

“ Do you think so ?” said Miss Obrien ;
“ well really I never admired red hair.”

“ Lady Indiana Corry’s hair is not red,”
replied the colonel ; “ hers are the sunny
tresses so much admired and celebrated by
the poets, ancient and modern.”

“ And bright blue eyes also, I believe,”
remarked Miss Obrien ; “ but I thought
you had been an admirer of the melting
hazel, colonel,” continued she, glancing at
Miss Lambart’s ; “ but man ‘ *was to one
thing constant never,*’ as the song says.
Well might poor lady Mazarina Maçna-
mara lament the versatility of your heart,
when even her beauty could not command
its constancy.”

“ Lady Mazarina is a notorious coquette,”
returned the colonel, “ and has been ma-
nœuvring for some years ; but, after all,
c’est son sort de mourir une fille.”

“ What a shocking prediction !” exclaim-
ed lady Stella.

“ It is well she does not hear you,” re-
sumed Miss Obrien ; “ and really now,

after all *des paroles de soie* that she declares you have pursued her with, I think she has some reason to complain."

"I am sorry," replied the colonel, "that she is not yet able to distinguish *bien-seance* from love. I knew she was vain of her person, and I flattered her *pour passer le temps*; but if she supposed my purpose matrimony, *je plains son contretemps*."

"Poor lady Mazarina!" sighed Miss O'Brien, affectedly; "farewell to her heart's cherished hope!"

"When is lord Conway expected?" asked lady Stella; "I am wild to see him."

"Really," said Miss O'Brien, looking at her supereciliously, "your impatience is extremely flattering to his lordship."

"Not in the least," resumed lady Stella; "for as I have never seen him, I think of him with the same kind of curiosity I should of any other person of whom I had heard much."

"Lord Conway's character then has preceded his person," said Miss O'Brien.

"I know nothing, and care as little, about his character," replied lady Stella;

“no doubt it is much like that of every other young man of fashion.”

“*Ce jour a été tres sombre et long,*” exclaimed Miss Obrien, affectedly raising herself from the ottoman on which she had lounged. “Oh, Paris! delightful Paris! it is there only a person of taste can exist, without feeling the horrors of ennui.—Miss Lambart, will you do me the favour to play that charming Italian sonata with which I was so charmed yesterday?”

Without waiting for an assenting reply, she hurried Ada towards a grand piano-forte, that stood in the recess of an inner apartment, to which folding doors opened from the drawing-room.

Lady Stella had taken the arm of Miss Lambart; and as the fair trio approached the instrument, the honourable colonel Lismore observed—“This is a mere *ruse* of Miss Obrien’s, whose inordinate vanity sickens at the praise of another; she has, it is true, a fine voice; but neither in melody or science does she equal Miss Lambart; yet she has artfully drawn her to the

instrument, in the hope and belief of excelling her."

"Miss Obrien is very beautiful," said sir Philip Egerton.

"It would be absolute heresy to deny," replied the colonel, "that *c'est une belle et elle a l'air du grand monde*; but she is too *manière* for my taste."

"Miss Lambart is a more natural character, if the countess Vandeleur does not spoil her," observed sir Philip; "she has much more intellect, with an equal share of beauty."

"Yes, I agree with you," said the colonel; "in her there is a something *si touchante, si naïve, si nouvelle*, that she appears far superior to Miss Obrien in the scale of perfection; but if I am not mistaken, she is already engaged, and it were a hopeless business to think of her."

"Look at lady Stella Savage—what do you think of her?" asked sir Philip; "she is an elegant figure, and has remarkable fine teeth."

Colonel Lismore laughed, and repeated part of an old song.

“ Three goddesses standing together,
Thus puzzled young Paris one day ;
How can I judge the value of either,
When all bear so equal a sway ?”

“ But for neither of these goddesses,” added colonel Lismore, “ will I contend.”

“ Am I to take you seriously ?” asked sir Philip ; “ upon your honour, you do not intend to address either of those ladies ?”

“ Seriously, and upon my honour,” returned the colonel. “ *Je vous dirai au secret*, I feel inclined to rival that leaden-brained fellow Oxmantown, who is more enamoured of his looking-glass than of lady Indiana Corry.”

“ But how,” asked sir Philip, “ will you reconcile her want of noble ancestry ?”

“ By remembering the noble spirit and brave actions of her father,” replied the colonel, “ who deserves to have been born an emperor, though he had the misfortune to be the son of an honest weaver ; however, having proved himself a hero, and obtained an earldom by merit, I am ready to admit him to rank with nobility.”

“ Old Cloghnickelty is of the same opinion,” observed sir Philip, “ and seems

bent on bringing about a match between lady Indiana Corry and his nephew."

"That is a deep scheme of Cloghnickelty's," said the colonel; "it is well known the earl of Drogheda has brought home Indian wealth to an immense amount, and if he will bestow his fair daughter on Mr. Oxmantown, it will enable the old fox, his uncle, to provide for three or four children, that his housekeeper, an artful woman, persuades him are his, though most of his acquaintance can trace their father in the strong resemblance they bear to Murdoch Mallory his butler. The title to which he is heir, Cloghnickelty thinks will be sufficient for Mr. Oxmantown, if he marries richly; but the finical booby is not deserving of lady Indiana, who, though little more than a child, has sense enough to despise him."

"And to prefer you," returned sir Philip; "well, success attend you."

"*C'est une folâtre charmante*," replied the colonel; "but I will not be coxcomb enough to say she prefers me; I am only certain that she dislikes Oxmantown, and believe that I could persuade her to accept

me; but I will take time and reflect upon all I have heard and seen, *pour et contre* matrimony, before I tell the little fairy the impression she has made, or ask her to decide between me and the honourable Mr. Oxmantown."

"I had almost made up my mind never to marry," said sir Philip Egerton; "but—I expect you will laugh at me."

"Because you have changed your mind; no, no, if a man makes a foolish resolution, there is wisdom in breaking it; besides, being so versatile myself, I dare not censure the instability of my friend."

"Well then," resumed sir Philip, "you must know I met lady Stella Savage several times at my cousin, lady Tyrone's, between whom and the baroness Ormsby there is a great intimacy, and I had frequent opportunities of seeing the patience and good temper with which she bore all the whims and requisitions of the baroness; and I pitied her from my soul, as I remembered, that being an orphan and dependant, she was compelled to submit to tyranny and caprice."

"*And pity melts the soul to love,*" said

the colonel; "and you have made her an offer of your hand, and she has consented to be lady Stella Egerton; so much for sympathy; well, my dear fellow, much happiness attend you! When is the marriage to take place? remember, I expect to attend you to the altar."

"Not so fast, not so fast, my good friend," replied sir Philip; "I have not yet declared myself to the lady; she has never given me any encouragement, and may, perhaps, prefer remaining in her present situation to becoming my wife."

"She is not so silly, take my word for it; only put the question, and you will find she will gladly relinquish flattering the graceful *em bon point* of dame Fusby, for the hand of sir Philip Egerton, and fifteen thousand a-year."

"Should she refuse me, I shall be miserable," said sir Philip.

"I have read of a sublime sultan being put in leading-strings, and the laws and customs of a mighty empire overturned and new-modelled by a *nez troussée*," returned the colonel, "but I never suspect-

ed the possibility of its rendering a man of your cool temperament unhappy."

"And lord Conway is hourly expected," said sir Philip, musing, "he may _____"

"No," interrupted the colonel, "he will not; the earl and countess of Vandeleur will never suffer their only son, the heir of their titles and honours, to take a portionless bride: do you not perceive——"

"I perceive lady Stella glances this way," said sir Philip, "as if reproaching our want of taste in remaining here, while beauty and music are neglected."

"*Allons*, both have their fascinations," replied the colonel; "but being aware of Miss O'Brien's intention, I determined to disappoint her; it is a pity she is so beautiful."

"She does not think so, and why," asked sir Philip, "do you?"

• "Because she has a good understanding," replied the colonel, "which might have rendered her amiable and agreeable; but the consciousness of beauty has made her vain, affected, and envious. She possesses the qualities of attraction and re-

pulsion in an eminent degree, for the heart her beauty captivates this hour, her *minauderies* disgust the next.

“ Her charms can never touch my heart,
Though she is passing fair ;
Yet had she less of trick and art,
I could have lodg’d her there.”

CHAP. IV.

“ Hark to those joyous strains,
And see the blazing lamps shed floods of light
Upon the pillar'd halls, that richly wreathed
With fruits and flowers of ev'ry sunny clime,
Invite and charm the taste. From golden vases
Costly perfumes float, and knights and dames,
Shining with jewels, in the pomp of dress,
Move through the mazy dance to lively sound
Of harp and viol; and there is mirth, and
Song, and revelry, bright eyes and smiling
Lips, and some sad hearts, for in that gay and
Glittering throng, all do not feel as gladsome
As they seem.”

“ 'Tis sad to think that forms so fair
Should ought but virtue shrine;
That evil should inhabit where
All seems so like divine.

“ But oft the melting eye deceives,
Shading its glance of ire,
And oft the snowy bosom heaves
With passions wild and dire.

“ When charm'd by forms so bright, so fair,
What heart e'er dreams of guile?
Or thinks deceit conceals a snare,
In beauty's dimpled smile.”

THE anxiously-expected Thursday, for which preparations had been made on a grand and expensive scale, the important

day that was to bring home the heir of Doneraile Castle, and that ushered in the seventeenth birthday of Miss Lambart, had arrived; and the sun, which for several days had been hid and obscured by dark clouds, burst forth in all his glory, as if to join in the gratulations, and gild the festivities that art, taste, and wealth, had combined their powers to produce and adorn.

Lady Stella Savage having made the baroness Ormsby's breakfast, left her to procure the refreshment of an hour or two's sleep, after the exertion of sitting up in bed, to take a bason of strong hyson tea, and masticate a plate of well-buttered toast.

In the breakfast-parlour lady Stella found the honourable Mrs. Chatterton, lingering over her chocolate, and reading a Calcutta newspaper, lent her by the earl of Drogheda.—“In the name of all that is wonderful,” exclaimed lady Stella, “how did that man come by all his wealth?”

“Why he killed, or took prisoner, the cham of Tartary, the czar of Muscovy, the emperor of Morocco, or the Great Mogul;

I declare I forget which," replied Mrs. Chatterton; "and exercising the right or power of victor, plundered the vanquished potentate, according to the usages of war, of all his immense treasures, diamonds, gold, ivory, and elephants, to an incalculable amount."

"I should have no sort of objection to be his heiress," said lady Stella, sighing, as she thought of the ten thousand privations attendant upon her own dependant state.

"Why, certainly," returned Mrs. Chatterton, "a splendid fortune is very desirable; but then there are great objections to deriving riches from so mean a source; for recollect, the father of the earl of Drogheda was a weaver, and, it is said, his lordship, in his young days, worked at the loom; however, it is an incontrovertible fact, that he was a serjeant in the regiment of which he became colonel."

"*N'import*," said lady Stella, "he has overcome the obstacles that impeded his rise in life, and himself and his addenda are admitted into the first circles; and while his wealth enables him to give sumptuous entertainments, few will be fastidious

enough to recollect the shuttle in his escutcheon."

"Your observations are perfectly correct," replied Mrs. Chatterton; "as you say, wealth is every thing, and can perform wonders, or how did these low-born people gain admission here, into the very palace of pride, from the gates of which the presiding deity has issued a decree, that none shall enter without a claim to patrician descent."

Lady Stella with difficulty restrained herself from asking by what means she had conciliated the favour of the countess, and obtained exemption from this arbitrary law, when the voice of Miss O'Brien gave her thoughts a new direction.

"Are you quite sure no box or package has arrived for me?" demanded Miss O'Brien of her footman, as she entered the parlour.

"Quite certain, ma'am; there was but one box sent from Dublin, and that was directed to the right honourable countess of Drogheda."

"You need not repeat the title of the odious low-born woman to me," said Miss O'Brien; "such canaille-sprung beings as

her, having plenty of money to bribe mercenary tradespeople, they get served and obliged, while their superiors are neglected and disappointed. Well, what do you wait for?" turning fretfully to her footman; "I have no commands for you at present."

"I waited, ma'am," replied the man, "to know what you wished to be done with Don Carlos; one of the countess Vandeleur's poodles has bit his ear, and——"

"Is this a time," returned Miss O'Brien, darting an angry look on the man, "to torment me about trifles, when a matter of so much importance, the disappointment of a ball-dress, is fretting me to death; do not trouble me about the little ugly beast. Do what you like with him, but do not plague me."

The man withdrew, coughing to stifle a laugh.

The honourable Mrs. Chatterton, who guessed, though she had never been informed, by whom Don Carlos had been presented to her niece, observed—"Well, this is certainly most surprising! I did not suppose, Charlotte, that any disap-

pointment would have made you careless about Don Carlos. Yesterday it would have been an unpardonable offence to ruffle the hairs on his ear, or to call him any other than beautiful, he was such a darling pet, and to-day the poor little fellow is an ugly beast, and his bitten ear may mortify, for any thing you care."

"I am sure I am mortified enough," replied Miss Obrien; "and the person who gave me the dog, who ought to——" she stopped suddenly, and colouring deeper than crimson, muttered something about asserting her claims, and not submitting to neglect.

Mrs. Chatterton, who had been looking out of the window, only caught the last word, and rejoined—"Very true; it will be wrong to neglect the poor animal; you had better look at his ear."

"Me plaister the little beast's ear! I wonder you can think of such a thing, ma'am," replied Miss Obrien; "not I indeed; if Connor and Millefleur cannot cure it, they must hang him out of the way."

Lady Stella laughed, and said—" *Rich gifts wax poor, when givers prove unkind.*"

“ I am really at a loss to comprehend from whence your ladyship draws that inference,” replied Miss O'Brien, haughtily ; “ I am certainly very much vexed, that a dress I ordered has not arrived as I expected, and might have expressed myself a little pettishly respecting Don Carlos, but my servants know how much I value him, and that he must have every attention paid to him. The disappointment of the dress has so discomposed me, that I hardly know what I say. I really am quite at a loss what to wear: the countess of Vandeleur, without doubt, will expect us to be dressed more than common,* in compliment to Miss Lambart, and the expected presence of her son.”

“ You will bestow the stamp of elegance and fashion on any thing you decide to wear, Charlotte,” replied Mrs. Chatterton, endeavouring to flatter her niece into good humour ; “ with your beauty, dress is but a minor consideration, for, as the poet says — “ *Loveliness needs not the foreign aid of ornament, but is, when unadorned, adorned the most.*”

“There I must beg leave to differ in opinion from the poet,” said Miss Obrien; “if I have beauty,” glancing consciously at her figure reflected in the chimney-glass, “it is necessary I should consult, and know what becomes and heightens its effect.”

“It is pity,” remarked lady Stella, “that you did not engage the services of madame Fripone, who professes to select colours, make dresses to become every shape and complexion, change the air *du pais*, and render her employer *une divinité du mode*.”

“I should consider that a very equivocal kind of fashion I was to derive from my milliner,” said Miss Obrien, scornfully.

“It is extremely serviceable though, to persons who have no taste of their own,” returned lady Stella, “and passes very well; for few are so rudely curious, as to inquire whether the becoming costume was the invention of the wearer, or the *marchand des modes*. I know many persons, who owe all their *eclat* in the *beau monde* to the skill and taste of their *fri-seure* and dress-maker, and who thank their

stars that fashion is to be purchased at a certain price, like all other commodities."

The honourable Mrs. Chatterton confessed, that having no taste of her own, she belonged to the multitude that were thankful to purchase it.

"Whose carriage is that, I wonder," said lady Stella, advancing to the window, "that is stopping at the lodge?"

"Lord Conway's, to a certainty," replied Mrs. Chatterton; "for that is monsieur Lemaine, his valet, that is reining his horse in, to let the carriage pass."

"Yes, it is Lemaine, sure enough," observed Miss Obrien, as she looked over her aunt's shoulder; "but I shall not stay here to congratulate his lordship on his arrival."

"And as I am a stranger to lord Conway," said lady Stella, following the retreating steps of Miss Obrien, "it certainly will not be proper that I should stay to receive him."

"Pshaw!" exclaimed Mrs. Chatterton; "it is general Forbes and his Patagonian daughters; and, as I live, lady Mazarina Macnamara. Poor creature, having an-

gled among the young men without success, she is now trying to hook an old one; but this, I suppose, is the dashing curricule of lord Conway that follows: no, it is lord Neagle and lord Charles Rokeby, the son looking older than his intended papa; but as I have no wish to be detained by folly and foppery, I shall leave them to refresh and entertain themselves in the best way they can."

The arrival of monsieur Lemaine being reported to the earl of Vandeleur, he was ordered into his presence; but instead of announcing, as the earl expected, the near approach of his son, he delivered a letter, that declared the impossibility of lord Conway quitting the sick-bed of sir Edward Melford, to whose kindness, and that of his family, he had been much indebted while in England, a debt which he felt himself bound in honour and gratitude to repay, by remaining with him till renovated health enabled him to proceed to Limerick.

This communication was of a nature so vexatious and disappointing, that it entirely overcame the earl's observance of

politeness and etiquette; pushing Lemaine from the door, near which he stood, he rushed past him, and rapidly striding up the staircase, entered the countess's dressing-room, without even the ceremony of knocking, exclaiming—"He will not come; he has neither affection nor duty. But we deserve this disrespectful treatment—it is the just reward of our foolish indulgence."

"Who will not come? What is the matter?" asked the countess, astonished at the angry tone and look of the earl, whose self-control seldom suffered passion to appear in his words or demeanour.

"Lord Conway," said the earl, "gnashing his teeth with rage, "remains at Dublin, and will not be here till it suits his own pleasure."

"He is ill," exclaimed the countess; "my dear Alfred would be here, if he was able to travel; my hope, my boy, is ill, and no friend, no relative near him; I will be gone to Dublin."

"No, he is not ill," said the earl; "read that letter, and you will find, that if not an affected, a most ridiculous friendship for a stranger, has stronger claims on the

heart of lord Conway than affection for his parents: he is in perfect health; and though he says that gratitude confines him to the sick-bed of his friend, I am persuaded this is mere evasion."

"If you do not believe what he has written, what do you suppose detains him in Dublin?" asked the countess, who felt much displeased at the little regret expressed by her son for the disappointment he was certain must result from his not obeying the earl's mandate for his return home.

"Disobedience, opposition to our wishes," returned the earl; "these were sufficient in his childhood to influence his conduct, and now, when a few weeks will set him free from parental authority, he makes no scruple to indulge his own pleasure, at the expence of our mortified feelings and patience. I am sorry I have not the power to disinherit him, that I cannot compel him to exercise his independent spirit for the support of his extravagance."

"You are too severe," said the countess; "Alfred has written this letter in haste, and perhaps commissioned his messenger

to make apologies, and express regrets he was too much agitated to write. Did you question the bearer of the letter?"

"No," replied the earl; "and if I had, it would not alter the offence, or lessen our disappointment."

"True; but there might be confirmation of his friend's illness," said the countess; "Alfred surely would not impose a falsehood upon us—I think, I hope he would not."

"You know he would," returned the earl; "you have had sufficient reason to know that he is selfish, obstinate, arrogant, and undutiful. You are certain, if he has received a hint of your wish that he should be here on this particular day, he will remain at Dublin out of mere contradiction."

"I know," said the countess, "that being an only child, and heir to the earl of Vandeleur, he has been suffered to have his own will rather too much; but while I acknowledge that he has errors, I must say you exaggerate them, and that he is by no means the odious character you represent him; nor can I believe that he would, without some sufficient cause,

some very powerful obligation, absent himself, when we have so urgently desired his presence."

"If he had been desired to remain away," replied the earl, "he would have returned in the very spirit of contradiction."

"I will hear what his messenger says myself," resumed the countess, ringing her bell; "for I fear you condemn Alfred too hastily."

The earl threw himself on a sofa, and folding his arms, and compressing his lips, to confine his anger, silently waited the entrance of monsieur Lemaine, of whom, as he bowed with all the grimace of second-hand elegance, the countess inquired after the health of lord Conway.

"Milord Conway be ver vell in helt, parfaitement bien, milady."

"Then what is the reason he did not proceed hither, instead of remaining at Dublin?" asked the countess.

"Dat is more much dan I can say, milady; milord Conway giv me de reason jamais; he tell me—'Lemaine, I stay here von, too, tre day; go on to de castle Donnerail, and say to monseigneur, mon pere,

and madame, ma mere, I sal be vid dem ven I am recovert from de fatigue of mon voyage."

"And pray, monsieur Lemaine, did you leave lord Conway alone?" inquired the countess; "had he no companion?"

"Oui, milady; milord Conway hav de ani, his compagne de voyage, saar Edward Melfore."

"Has he no other companion?" demanded the earl, sternly; "are you certain, monsieur Lemaine, that lord Conway has no other companion than sir Edward Melford?"

"Oui, monseigneur, I am ver sure."

"And pray, monsieur," asked the countess, "what is lord Conway to do without your attendance? I understood you were his valet."

"Oui, certainment, milady; I vas hav de honneur to be his lorship's valet, un peu passee, mais now I am de currier, for bring de intelligence of his lorship's helt, and to tell dat he vill come pay his baise-mains, his compliments, mais je ne sais veder in von, too, or tre day; milord

Convay say to me—‘ Lemaïne, vous attendre at de castle till I come dere; I vill do vid Pigot de grum.’ Sans doute, monsieur Pigot, he dress de cheval in ver bon style, mais vat vill he do vid de papillottes, vat vill de grum comprendre about de cravat? eh bien, I tink milord Convay vill tire vid his coup d’essai.”

The countess, finding there was no elucidation of lord Conway’s absence to be obtained from monsieur Lemaïne, dismissed him; and not being able to find an excuse for her son’s undutiful and rude conduct, beyond the illness of sir Edward Melford, which not having been mentioned by his valet, was as likely to be false as true, she agreed with the earl in regretting that he had not in childhood been kept under more restraint, and taught the duty of respecting and obeying his parents. Once she thought of putting off the ball; but every thing was prepared, the house full of company, and if the entertainments did not go on, it would be evident the earl and herself in reality intended to celebrate their son’s arrival, and not their niece’s birthday.

Having agreed to excuse the absence of Lord Conway, by saying that the roughness of the passage from England had so excessively fatigued him, that he was under the necessity of remaining at Dublin, to recover from sickness and dizziness, before he could proceed, the earl and countess separated, but so mutually out of humour, that it required all their self-command to assume placidity, and conceal from their guests their mortification and disappointment.

Miss O'Brien had that morning a double cause for vexation; and though her obsequious French soubrette soothed and flattered with consummate skill, she could not get the better of her chagrin, or silence her expressions of rage against the insolence of the milliner, who had presumed to neglect sending the dress she had ordered, and which, she hoped and expected, would have rivalled the costume of even the countess Vandeleur, who paid large sums for new inventions, and plumed herself on being the goddess of fashion, the leader of taste and elegance.

· Dress after dress Millefleur unfolded

and spread abroad, only to be rejected, till her good genius suggested to her to say, as she took the protecting papers from an embroidered blue crape—"Dis I have de ressouvenir is de robe you vore ven de duke de Montagne call you de Venus, and say—' *Que elle est la divinité du mode.*'"

This was a lucky remembrance, for poor Millefleur's patience was at the last gasp; she had the happiness to see the gloom of discontent give place to a smile, and to hear Miss Obrien say—"The duke de Montagne is a man of taste and discernment, so out of compliment to him, I will wear the blue crape; the trimming of silver roses has a pretty effect."

"En verité, it vill be de attire magnifique for de occasion," replied the delighted Millefleur; "I sal be ravie de joie to see you eclipse all de lady dis grand nuit, and vin all de hearts of de gentlehommes."

"That can never be, Millefleur," said Miss Obrien, with a still brighter smile; "you forget that Miss Lambart and lady Stella Savage will be present."

"Bah!" replied Millefleur, "dey vill meet vid de malheur to be overlook ven

you appear; *hélas ! de pauvre Miss Lambar, she vill never be célébrée for beauté, she is si inanimé, si glacé, si stupide.*"

"But she is very rich," replied Miss Obrien, with a sigh, "and that will give her every charm in the eyes of the men."

"Miss Lambar vill never hav de air distingue," resumed Millefleur, placing a wreath of the false jewels she had ridiculed to Janet, on the light auburn tresses of Miss Obrien, "*nor de tournure charmante,*" adding a sprig of "*Forget me not,*" "let her hav de riches much as she vill."

Miss Obrien surveyed her person, and vanity assured her that "*she was beauty's self;*" and this conviction reconciled her in some degree to the two disappointments she had met that day.

Norah had arrived at the castle, early enough to breakfast in Miss Lambert's dressing-room; and when her ornaments were placed on the toilet for Norah to admire, she took up the antique gold chain, to which the diamond sun was attached, and having examined it attentively for some time, she sighed heavily, and laying it down, said—"When that grand chain

was placed on your neck, darling, you was such a babe, that it was almost as heavy as yourself; but for all its weight, you held it fast with your little dimpled hands, and was very unwilling to let it be taken from you."

, "That chain has very often excited my curiosity," replied Miss Lambart; "can you tell me who it was that bestowed the splendid gift upon me?"

"No," replied Norah, shaking her head sorrowfully, "no, not for a certainty; I had a suspicion, sure, but what then, it is of no use to be after speaking of the dead."

"Is the giver dead then?" asked Ada; "I am very sorry to hear you say so, because I have indulged the hope that I should yet see my unknown friend."

"Put it out of your thoughts altogether, and as soon as you can, jewel," said Norah, "for sure and sure had the gentleman been alive, he would have come himself, or sent a letter, just to learn whether you had his present; and sure my sister's son, Phelim, who went over seas with him, if he had been above ground, would have made some inquiry in all these long years

after his father, and mother, and sister, if he quite and clean forgot to remember me. No, no," continued Norah, wiping away her tears with the corner of her clean white apron, "they are both dead, master and man, peace be with their souls! It is of no use for you, darling, to think about the giver of the chain; he is gone where the wicked cease from troubling."

"But I cannot help thinking of him," replied Miss Lambart; "and I will come and breakfast with you some morning soon, and you shall tell me all you know about the stranger who gave me this magnificent chain."

"Sure I know nothing at all, jewel," returned Norah, fearful of displeasing the earl and countess by disclosing her thoughts, "I had only a sort of suspicion—a kind of a dream, and nobody in their senses is after minding dreams."

Miss Lambart was prevented from saying any thing more on the subject by Mrs. Blandy tapping at the door, to say when Miss Lambart was dressed, the countess of Vandeleur would attend, to direct the placing of her ornaments; and to inform

her that a messenger had arrived from lord Conway, to express his concern that indisposition would deprive him of the pleasure of offering his personal congratulations on that day, but he hoped to be at the castle the following week.

“ I am truly thankful for this short reprieve,” said Miss Lambart, as the door closed on Mrs. Blandy ; “ the certainty that lord Conway will not be present at my exhibition, has taken a weight off my spirits, for I am convinced the earl and countess would have expected me to dance with him ; and, without doubt, we should have been extremely unpleasant partners to each other, for I am utterly unacquainted with Parisian steps and graces, in which I suppose he excels : but come, Janet, we must not make the countess wait, or we shall surely fall under her displeasure, so be quick and attire me in my robes, which I shall gladly lay aside.”

“ Sure now, darling, they are very rich and grand,” said Norah.

“ Too rich and too grand to suit or become my youth and slender figure,” replied Miss Lambart ; “ and I shall most

sincerely rejoice when this night's pageantry is over."

Almost covered with diamonds, Miss Lambart was led into the state drawing-room, to receive the *complimens comme a l'ordinaire* on her natal day, from a most splendidly-dressed assembly of persons of rank, fashion and beauty.

Among the guests who sat down to the sumptuous dinner provided for the occasion, none appeared more conspicuous for magnificence of dress than the countess of Drogheda, whose silver gauze turban, folded after the Burmese fashion, supported on its cone-formed top a glittering peacock, the body of which was composed of pearls, and its top-knot, wings, and spreading tail, of different-coloured jewels : many a wishful glance was sent towards the costly bird ; and even the countess Vandeleur, whose head and bosom blazed with diamonds, envied the possessor of that unique treasure.

When Miss Lambart returned to her apartment, to put on her ball-dress, she found Norah sharply reprimanding Janet for loitering in the corridor to talk with a

Frenchman, and permitting him to take hold of her hand and kiss it.

“ Why la, mother, how could I help it ?” said Janet ; “ it was mounseer Lemaine, my lord Conway’s valet, that just asked me ‘a civil question, and sure it would have been rude in me not to answer him ; and he did not poison my hand with putting his lips upon it.”

“ Sure and I am not certain of that,” replied Norah ; “ there is poison in the breath of some men.”

“ Mercy forbid !” exclaimed Janet ; “ sure now, mother, you are enough to frighten one out of one’s wits.”

“ You ought to be frightened, and ashamed too,” said Norah, “ to be after laughing and talking with a French mounseer ; but, pray, what was the fellow saying to you ?”

“ Fellow, indeed !” repeated Janet ; “ how disrespectful you speak, mother ! that fellow, as you call him, is no less a person than lord Conway’s gentleman.”

“ Gentleman ! a fiddlestick !” returned Norah ; “ sorrow to such gentlemen ! but

what was he saying?—answer me that, will you?”

“Why, dear me, mother, what a fuss you make about nothing! if I was to die,” said Janet, “he only civilly asked me which was Miss Obrien’s dressing-room, that was all.”

“And that was too much, by the one-half, sure,” resumed Norah. “What business had he to ask such impertinent questions? And then, I suppose, he was after asking which was Miss Lambart’s dressing-room?”

“No, he did not,” answered Janet; “mamselle Millefleur is mounseer’s own cousin; and sure there can be no harm in his wanting to tell her a little news about her relations.”

“Then he might tell her his news in the servants’-hall, or in the housekeeper’s-parlour,” said Norah; “that would be more proper than her mistress’s dressing-room: but you have no business to giggle and chatter with this French mounseer, at all at all. Cousin, indeed! do you mind and keep out of his way, and take care that he does not be after cozening you:

sure and I wish, with all the soul of me, that you and my darling young lady was both of you safe at Lisburn Abbey, under the care of her honourable ladyship, the good baroness."

"Amen to that wish!" ejaculated Miss Lambart, who heard it as she entered: "but is any thing the matter?" observing the pouting lip of Janet, and the sorrowful look of Norah; "tell me, dear mother, has any thing happened?"

"No, jewel, nothing has happened yet, I believe," replied Norah; "and I was only just warning Janet to take care that nothing did happen; for a mother's mind, darling, is always after being full of fear and care, when she sees a giddy thoughtless creature, like her that stands there, among a parcel of servants, that when they put on their master's coats, try to imitate their ways, and do their best to be full as wicked."

Miss Lambart could only bid Janet attend to the good advice of her mother, for she was pressed for time, and in haste to repair to the ball-room, where the company were already assembling, and where

dancing would not commence till she appeared.

Having made the necessary alteration in her dress, Miss Lambart descended to the anti-room, where she encountered lady Indiana Corry, who was reading a note she had just picked up.—“ I do not understand what this means,” said she, addressing Ada; “ will you assist me to make it out?”

Miss Lambart took the note and read—

“ What a lady asserts, it would be rude to contradict; but, to convince you that I am not forgetful of your beauty, or the engagement you seem to think I wish broken, I am here *incog.* for reasons that shall be explained when we meet. When you are tired of flattery and dancing, you will find me waiting the honour of an audience in your dressing-room.”

“ And who has presumed,” asked Ada, with a look of concern and astonishment,

“ to address lady Indiana Corry with such freedom?”

“ You are mistaken, Miss Lambart,” said the little beautiful Peri; “ this note is not addressed to me; it lay on the carpet when I entered the room, and supposing it might be a *billet-doux*, I had the curiosity to peep into it.”

“ It is a *billet-doux* of very strange import indeed,” replied Ada; “ but as we have no key to the contents, and it does not concern either of us, in my opinion it will be best to destroy it.”

“ Not till I have seen it, I pray and beseech you,” said lady Stella Savage, who entered the room as Miss Lambart was reading; “ I have a great passion for love-letters, and beg to be indulged with a perusal of the *pctit roman du cœur*.” Having looked over the note, she observed, “ It is very like an assignation, though not made with the warmth of a lover, or the politeness of good breeding, but from whom, or to whom, as there is neither signature nor superscription, we can have no guess; therefore, to prevent the suspicion, comment, and invention, it might occasion, I

agree with Miss Lambart's advice—let it be destroyed.”

Lady Indiana instantly tore the precious *morçeau* in pieces, and the fair trio entered the ball-room together.

Miss Obrien was already there, and, in her usual listless manner, was listening, with half-closed eyelids, to lady Mazarina Macnamara's lament that lord Conway had not arrived.—“The beaux, I dare say, do not participate in your concern,” said Miss Obrien; “they; no doubt, think the ball will proceed very well without him.”

“Nothing more likely,” returned lady Mazarina; “they will rejoice at what I consider a disappointment: but I wonder who will open the ball with Miss Lambart, as lord Conway is not present.”

“Only look at that butterfly on lady Indiana Corry's hair!” exclaimed Miss Forbes; “I never saw any thing half so beautiful in my life.”

“Except the peacock on her mama's turban,” replied Miss Obrien; “did you never hear that the earl of Drogheda was gifted by a fairy with the power to convert

steel and gunpowder into gold and diamonds?"

"No, I never heard it," said Miss Forbes; "do you think it is true?"

Vexed and mortified as Miss O'Brien felt, at the reflection that she wore paste and coloured glass, while lady Drogheda and her daughter glittered in diamonds, she could not help smiling at the simplicity of Miss Forbes, who seemed sufficiently credulous to swallow the most improbable and extravagant tale; but without replying to the young lady's question, she said, "Your parents, Miss Forbes, were descendants of noble and ancient families, but for all that, these low-born vulgar Droghedas will out-glitter you with their Indian plunder."

"Papa says we are too young to wear diamonds," replied Annabella Forbes.

Miss O'Brien smiled again, but it was at the vanity of general Forbes, who made his overgrown daughters dress like children, that he might sink a few years of his own age.

"I am sure I do not envy lady Indiana Corry her diamond butterfly," said Miss

Forbes, while her look contradicted the assertion.

“Envy! certainly not,” resumed Miss Obrien; “what person of principle or feeling would? I would not have the peacock or the butterfly for the world.”

“Dear me! why?” said Miss Forbes; “I am sure I should like them extremely.”

“But would you like to have the ghost of the Burmese princess, from whom they were taken, put her dingy countenance between your curtains of a night, and demand the restoration of the splendid baubles?” asked Miss Obrien.

“La! how frightful!” exclaimed Annabella Forbes.

Weary of these *fadeures*, Miss Obrien turned from them, *sans apologie*, in the hope of being joined by lord Neagle, but in crossing the room, he stopped to pay his compliments to the countess of Vandeleur, and to condole with her on the absence of her son; but while *politesse* detained him by the side of the countess, his eyes were fixed on the lovely figure of Miss Lambart, and his attention became so

captivated by the magic of her smile, that he exclaimed—" *Qu'elle est charmante !*"

"Of whom is your lordship speaking?" asked the countess.

"Of Miss Lambart," replied lord Neagle; "I wish she would accept me as the humble substitute of lord Conway."

"I will introduce you," said the wary countess, for though of unexceptionable rank, lord Neagle had little in his person or manner to make a sudden impression; and though a well-educated and sensible man, he had not the ready wit nor the art of saying those lively agreeable nothings that win female favour and regard. Certain that a ball-room was not the sphere in which his lordship was likely to be attractive, the countess presented him, and he was permitted to open the ball with Miss Lambart—an arrangement highly displeasing to the honourable Mr. Oxmantown, who had been aiming at the agreeable, and flattering the countess Vandeleur on her youthful appearance and exquisite taste in dress, in the hope that she would appoint him to represent lord Conway;

and his mortification and disappointment were excessive, as he saw her take the offered arm of lord Neagle, leaving him to chew the bitter cud of resentment. Before he had quite made up his mind whether he should retire to his own apartment, or go into the card-room, lord Cloghnickelty asked him, "What he was dreaming about, and why he did not go and secure the hand of lady Indiana Corry, whom he had just left surrounded with beaux?"

Mr. Oxmantown said he should not add to the number, for he felt feverish and nervous, and did not intend to dance.

"Was ever such an insufferable puppy!" exclaimed Cloghnickelty. "Confound your nerves! I am sick to hear a fellow, that looks strong enough to perform the labours of Hercules, talk of his weak nerves; but I insist——"

"Pray, sir," whispered Mr. Oxmantown, in a languid tone, "I entreat you will not agitate yourself on my account; for really, the excessive heat of the room is already too much for me, without the

additional pain of seeing you put yourself in a passion."

"Confound your prosing," replied Cloghnickelty; "I am in no passion; but dance you shall, or——See, you milksop! you dolt! there goes that sneering, impertinent fellow, Lismore, to solicit the hand of your mistress. Come along, and ask her to dance with you, or never claim relationship with me as long as you live."

The honourable Mr. Oxmantown resigned himself, with a sigh, to the guidance of his uncle, who took his arm; but before he had led, or rather dragged, him across the room, lady Indiana, all radiant with smiles, was standing up with colonel Lismore. Mr. Oxmantown felt no sort of envy or disappointment; he had no particular passion for the lady, and less *pour le danse*; and while old Cloghnickelty fumed and swore, he was glancing round for a seat, on which he hoped to repose his Colloscean limbs, and at the same time enjoy the pleasure of seeing Miss Lambart thread the mazes of the dance, with the grace and airy elegance of a wood-nymph; but in this intention he was foiled by his tor-

mentor, for just as he had reached an inviting chair, he was commanded to ask the hand of lady Mazarina Macnamara. Knowing that resistance would avail him nothing, Mr. Oxmantown made a soliciting bow, in obedience to his uncle's wish. Lady Mazarina was engaged to general Forbes, but she kindly introduced him to her friend Annabella, whose tall, bony figure, in amplitude so resembled his own, that they excited the gaze, if not the admiration, of the company.

Lord Charles Rokeby observed to Miss O'Brien, with whom he was shewing off his graces, that they were a pair of animals as exactly matched as the dappled greys that ran in his curriele, and had as much bone, though by no means as fine action: "if they should take a fancy to marry," continued his lordship, "Ireland, in the course of time, may expect to see a race of giants."

In a pause of the dance, old Cloghnickelty made a fruitless attempt to move his nephew, who complained of heat and nervous headach, towards lady Indiana Corry; but perceiving his intention, and determined not to exhibit with him, she en-

gaged herself to lord Neagle, at the same moment that colonel Lismore led out Miss Lambart, which*so exasperated the temper of Cloghnickelty, that cursing his nephew for a sapskull and a puppy, he stumped into the card-room, to affect youth and strength, and speak, loud as his asthma would allow him, in the ears of dowagers, who were still pleased to receive a compliment, even from him. The absence of his uncle was a happy relief to Mr. Oxmantown, with whose ponderous frame, cutting capers, and frisking about, by no means agreed; and he felt happy to take a seat by the honourable Mrs. Chatterton, though he voted her, in his own mind, as very disagreeable, and dreaded her as a *prôneur notoire*; yet even the torment of her eternal tongue was less fatiguing to his nerves, than dancing, and particularly with such young ladies as Miss Annabella Forbes, who moved with the animation of a statue, and had besides, what he detested, red hair, and its disagreeable concomitant, freckles, plentifully scattered over her face and bosom.

“ Really it is too bad,” said Mrs. Chat-

terton, "to see so many young ladies without partners, and the gentlemen looking as *nonchalante* as if they had no sense of politeness, or what was expected from them in a ball-room."

"I am excessively sorry to be obliged to sit down," replied Mr. Oxmantown, in his usual low languid voice; "but my health, the weakness of my nerves, will not support the rude exercise of dancing."

"See, lady Mahon has dropped her fan," resumed Mrs. Chatterton; "haste and pick it up."

"I must beg to decline," said Mr. Oxmantown; "for were I to put myself to that trouble, she would expect me to ask her to dance."

"And why not?" asked Mrs. Chatterton; "she is a fine woman."

"Passable," replied Mr. Oxmantown, affectedly.

"And a delightful dancer," continued Mrs. Chatterton.

"For me, that holds out no sort of inducement," replied Mr. Oxmantown; "besides, she is reported to be a wit, and I have a prodigious dislike to clever women."

“ Mrs. Mahon reads, and has a good memory; but really I never suspected her of being a wit,” said Mrs. Chatterton: “ to be sure, she talks a great deal.”

“ Which is, of all other things, to me the most insufferably ennuicing,” returned Mr. Oxmantown, abruptly quitting his seat, and walking away.

“ *Voilà un insolent !*” exclaimed the honourable Mrs. Chatterton; “ but *c’est un gros bête*, and his rudeness is of no consequence;” yet, while making this assertion, she hastened to lady Rhoda Daly, to complain of his *grossièreté*.

Though many beautiful females graced the ball-room at Doneraile Castle that night, Miss Lambart was confessedly the most beautiful; and while the earl and countess of Vandeleur beheld the admiration her person and graceful affability excited, they felt their displeasure against lord Conway increase, for they feared he would, by his own negligence, lose the prize they so anxiously had plotted to secure for him.

Before supper, Miss Obrien had the misfortune to twist her ancle, and finding her-

self unable to dance, she made an apology to the countess of Vandeleur, and declared her intention to apply eau de Cologne to the sprain, and retire to bed.

The countess expressed much concern at the accident, and recommended an embrocation, made by her housekeeper.

Mrs. Chatterton assisted her niece to her chamber, who complained of much pain, and begged to be left to her repose. There was neither swelling nor appearance of hurt on Miss Obrien's ankle; and Mrs. Chatterton bade her good night, convinced that she had not met with any accident; but that jealous and envious of Miss Lambart's attractions, she had retired from mere pique and spite, and in the hope of disappointing lord Neagle, to whom she was engaged for the first two dances after supper; but when Mrs. Chatterton returned to the ball-room, she saw no trace of regret in his lordship's countenance, for he was talking with and fanning Miss Lambart.

During this evening, colonel Lismore drew from the lively *naïve*, lady Indrina Corry, a confession that she liked him in-

finitely better than Mr. Oxmantown, with *ses grands yeux horribles*, and that she never would suffer him to speak of love to her.

“ I trust you have not made the same resolve respecting me,” said the colonel, gently pressing her little white hand.

“ Miss Obrien says that you made love to lady Mazarina Macnamara, and left her when you had gained her affections,” replied lady Indiana, withdrawing her hand, and that you pretend to be in love with every new face you see, just for amusement.”

“ This is mere slander,” said the colonel, “ and I swear to you, on my honour as a soldier and a gentleman——”

“ No,” interrupted lady Indiana, “ I will not suffer you to swear; I only request you will not make love to me, for I should not like to be made a jest of.”

“ He must be worse than savage who could jest with your innocence,” said the colonel. “ Miss Obrien has asserted what she knows is not true; and you perceive,” continued he, “ lady Mazarina does not suffer from my inconstancy, for she

appears quite pleased and happy with the attentions of general Forbes."

"Yes," replied lady Indiana, "she does appear so indeed; but we cannot look into her heart, to see what she regrets or approves. For my part, I do not think I should ever be happy, if you——but I am very silly, for what should a child like me know about love—I am talking on a subject I know nothing of."

The colonel thought the deep blush that crimsoned her face and bosom, made the little fairy more beautiful than ever, and he determined to represent to the earl of Drogheda the great cruelty of permitting the leaden-headed Oxmantown, or rather the *diable boiteux*, old Cloghnickelty, to persecute her, when she so ingenuously and firmly protested against the alliance; and as his own fortune in possession, as well as his future prospects, were much superior to Mr. Oxmantown's, to mention his own wish of becoming a candidate for the affections and hand of lady Indiana Corry.

On this night also, sir Philip Egerton, encouraged by the smiles of lady Stella

Savage, threw aside his reserve and his apprehensions, and so successfully pleaded his love suit, that she consented he should apply to the baroness Ormsby for her approbation, which they were both assured she would withhold.

“It is certainly a compliment that ought to be paid to the baroness,” said sir Philip; “but I am convinced I shall not obtain her approbation.”

“I fear not,” said lady Stella, with a gentle sigh.

“But I trust you will not suffer her disapproval to influence you?”

Lady Stella blushed, and cast down her eyes; but a smile, which he detected on her lip, encouraged sir Philip to say—“I am fully aware how valuable you are to the baroness, and that her selfishness would, if possible, keep you single as long as she lives.”

“I have some reason to believe,” said lady Stella, “that the baroness would not willingly part with me.”

“And does this desire to keep you near her proceed from love to you, or herself?” asked sir Philip—“is it your happi-

ness, or her own convenience she consults?"

"These are questions I never dare ask myself," replied lady Stella.

"No," continued sir Philip, "for the answer would be little favourable to the heart of the baroness."

"And very mortifying to mine," said lady Stella; "but dependent as I unfortunately am, it would be unwise in me to investigate too closely into the motives that procure me favour and protection."

"Be no longer a dependent," urged sir Philip; "I have long been an attentive observer of the caprices of the baroness, and I entreat you quit her self-interested protection for that of an adoring husband—promise me you will be mine!"

Lady Stella did not withdraw her hand from the warm, earnest pressure of sir Philip's, as she said—"I am greatly indebted to the baroness for her protection, and I trust my conduct has evinced my gratitude; but if a selfish regard for her own convenience induces her to oppose—" She paused, and blushed; but on the entreaty of sir Philip, confirmed his happiness, by adding—"If, as I am sure she

will, the baroness refuses her consent, I shall consider myself at liberty to follow my own inclinations."

Sir Philip pressed her hand to his lips; and it was agreed, that as soon as the baroness Ormsby returned home, he should make his proposals. But while the hope of unclouded felicity in wedded life sparkled in the eyes, and gladdened the hearts of this youthful pair, there were but few others in that assemblage of rank and fashion, that could boast of prospects as promising and bright. Under a gay exterior, there were many sad hearts, and the witty *repartie*, and the responding laugh, issued from the lips of persons whose minds were little attuned to mirth, or the enjoyment of pleasure; but at an early period of life we are taught to conceal our feelings, to stifle our sensibilities; at first the task is painful, but custom makes us adepts in dissimulation, and we become at last, like the Spartan boy, able to conceal the pangs that tear and devour us.

Among those who laughed, without being joyous, and talked to get rid of reflection, was lord Neagle, whose affection

for his handsome, but imprudent mother, had induced him to diminish, and that very considerably, his fortune, to pay her debts of honour; and he now more than ever wished her marriage with lord Charles Rokeby concluded, that he might retire from fashionable life, and put in practice the plan of retrenchment he had laid down. Under the appearance of unthinking gaiety, lord Neagle concealed a heart deeply wounded by the folly of his mother, whose passion for high play had not only involved her in pecuniary embarrassments, but had created suspicions injurious to her reputation; for it was more generally believed in the great world, that lord Charles Rokeby's attachment was merely a *liaison pour s'amuser*, which he had no intention should last *toute la vie*, or end in any thing *si monotones* as matrimony.

Lord Neagle was not without his own suspicions on this matter, for though his mother was a beautiful and fascinating woman, she was so many years older than lord Charles Rokeby, that it appeared improbable he would marry her; and this night these fears and doubts haunted him

with oppressive force; for in Miss Lambart he beheld all that his glowing fancy had ever pictured of lovely and engaging, of sensibility and virtue; but how could he, whose fortune was deranged, and whose fame was blighted, by his mother's errors, how could he speak to her of love, or presume to aspire to the hand of the niece of the proud earl of Vandeleur, the heiress to incalculable riches? Dissimulation was not congenial with the character of lord Neagle, but too proud to let the misery of his mind appear, he constrained himself to wear the semblance of gaiety; for with the generality of the world, he knew that pity was but another name for contempt, and he thought he could bear any thing better than the scorn of the heartless beings by whom he was surrounded, and who called themselves his friends.

At dawn of day, when the company separated, he joined with those who protested they had never passed a more delightful day, or been more gratified and entertained.

When Miss Lambart retired to undress, she inquired of Janet, whether she had heard how Miss Obrien was after her accident.

“ Mrs. Millefleur made very light of it, ma’am,” replied Janet.

“ I am glad to hear it is not a very serious sprain,” said Miss Lambart.

“ Mrs. Millefleur laughed about it, ma’am,” resumed Janet, “ and said Miss O'Brien could have danced well enough if she pleased, for there was nothing the matter with her ankle, but she had a reason for leaving the ball-room.”

“ The twisting her ankle was a sufficient reason,” said Miss Lambart; “ it must have been extremely painful.”

“ I am sure I do not know, ma’am,” continued Janet; “ but Mrs. Millefleur said she wished Miss O'Brien's heart might never pain her worse than her ankle; but she was sure it would, when a secret that she knew came to be told.”

Not wishing to inquire into Miss O'Brien's secrets, or to encourage her soubrette's loquacity, Miss Lambart changed the subject, by asking what time Norah left the castle; and hastening to undress, she dismissed Janet; when, having spent some time in prayer, she soon enjoyed the sweet and tranquil sleep of peace and innocence.

The next day, in a private conference with Miss Lambart, the countess of Vandeleur thought it necessary and proper to remove the impression of disobedience and want of filial respect, if such had been made on her mind, by extolling to the skies the humanity of her son, who had sacrificed the dutiful and impatient desire he felt to embrace his parents, from whose tenderness he had been so long separated, to attend the sick-bed of his friend, sir Edward Melford, whose unfortunate indisposition, together with his being an absolute stranger in Dublin, constrained lord Conway to remain with him till he was able to pursue his journey to Connaught, where an affair of moment demanded his presence.

Politeness obliged Miss Lambart to condole with the countess on the concern and disappointment she expressed at the protracted absence of her son; but in reality, she was pleased at what she could not help considering a reprieve from rudeness and *hauteur*; for though she hoped to find his temper and his manners improved and amended, yet, in spite of her endeavours

to suppress them, unpleasant reminiscences, and distressing presentiments, stamped the belief on her mind, that lord Conway's return would render her stay at Doneraile Castle more than ever tedious and disagreeable.

Miss Obrien's sprained ankle did not prevent her appearing at dinner, when the surprising virtues, and sovereign efficacy of *eau de Cologne*, formed, for some time, the general topic of conversation.

Mr. Oxmantown whispered his wonder whether it was good for weak nerves and low spirits.

"It is good for every complaint '*that flesh is heir to*,'" said the countess Vandeleur, "if you will believe the French advertisements."

"Then I believe it to be good for none," replied lord Cloghnickelty, "like all other universal medicaments."

"Surely you cannot dispute the miraculous cure it has performed on Miss Obrien's ankle?" said Mrs. Chatterton, ironically.

"Most certainly not," replied Clogh-

nickelty ; “ I devoutly believe every thing the ladies tell me.”

“ What a pity the man is so very ugly,” sighed Miss Forbes, fixing her *des yeux éteints* upon him, “ and that he has a cork leg ! no doubt he would make a manageable husband.”

“ How much lord Cloghnickelty’s behaviour contradicts his words !” said lady Indiana Corry.

“ I am very sorry that any part of my conduct,” replied his lordship, “ should have given cause for such censure from those beautiful coral lips ; “ I thought my devotion to the fair sex had been——”

“ It was not of want of devotion,” interrupted Indiana, “ but want of belief, I accused your lordship.”

“ I believe the ladies to be every thing that they wish to appear,” said Cloghnickelty, “ lovely and amiable ; and I believe——”

“ Your belief is, I perceive, very extensive and complimentary,” interrupted lady Indiana again ; “ and I much wonder, with this excessive complaisance to my sex, that you have so long persisted in af-

fecting to disbelieve me, when I have invariably assured you how much I disliked——”

“Hush, Indy! be quiet, my love—now will you,” said the countess of Drogheda; “sure it is not the genteel thing for a young creature like you to be after talking so much to a gentleman, no, nor proper at all at all.”

“Perhaps then,” replied lady Indiana, “it would be more proper if I was to write to him.”

“You write to lord Cloghnickelty!” said her father, laughing; “faith, darling, I should like to know what you can have to write to him about.”

“I should feel much honoured,” rejoined Cloghnickelty, “and most happy to attend to the young lady’s commands.”

“I hope you will keep your word, and give them your very serious attention,” said Indiana; and relying on this promise, you may depend on my sending you a chit to-morrow morning.”

“A chit!” repeated old Cloghnickelty, wheezing, and rearing up his spare form into what he thought dignity—“a chit! I

have no intention to decry the attractions of juvenility; but permit me to assure your ladyship, I have no passion for chits. I agree with a certain great and eminent poet, that they ‘*smell of bread and butter.*’

This misconception occasioned a laugh from some part of the company, in which Cloghnickelty joined, believing he had said a witty thing. *Toute la pruderie de la cœur en fut alarmée*, they cast down their eyes, and tried to blush; till the earl of Drogheda relieved their embarrassed feelings, and enabled them to look up, by explaining to old Cloghnickelty, that his daughter designed to send him a note, which in Hindostance is called a chit.

Cloghnickelty tried to look agreeable, and to speak in a clear voice, as he protested he should be much flattered, and consider himself infinitely honoured, to receive a billet from her fair hands.

“All this sounds very pleasantly,” said Indiana; “but I wish I was certain you would send me a jewab such as I shall approve.”

“If I only knew what trinket or ornament would prove most pleasing and ac-

ceptable," rejoined Cloghnickelty, with an air of surprise and discontent, "I should feel particularly happy in the opportunity you offer me of presenting it; perhaps your ladyship will be good enough to enlighten me with a hint; and depend upon it, your wish shall be complied with by Mr. Oxmantown, who may be jealous if I take upon me to——"

Lady Indiana cast a look of contempt and dislike on Cloghnickelty's nephew, whose stupid face and heavy figure never looked to less advantage than at that moment.—"My request will be to you, lord Cloghnickelty," resumed Indiana, blushing at the construction put upon the word *jewab*; "and I am persuaded Mr. Oxmantown will acquiesce in your opinion; but, in the first place, I seriously assure you, I neither want *chudder**, *bangle*†, *cummerbound*‡, *jewel*, *trinket*, or ornament; when I said I hoped you would send me a *jewab* such as I should approve, I simply meant an answer to my note."

"I do not think it would be possible to do otherwise," said his lordship; "but I

A veil.

† Bracelets.

‡ A sash.

trust you will favour me with writing in plain English, for I am quite ignorant of foreign languages, and should be extremely sorry not to understand a lady's wishes."

"Depend upon my taking care to be intelligible," replied Indiana; "the matter I shall address you upon is so interesting to my happiness, that I shall not suffer you to mistake my meaning."

The ladies looked at each other significantly, as if they thought she was inclined to make love to old Cloghnickelty. The baroness Ormsby cast a supercilious glance upon the little fairy, and whispered something to the countess Vandeleur, at whose right hand she sat, who immediately gave the signal for withdrawing.

The countess of Drogheda was full of curiosity to know what her daughter could have to write about to lord Cloghnickelty, and she entered the drawing-room with an intention of making inquiries, and expressing her disapproval; but instead of following her mother, lady Indiana, with Miss Lambart and lady Stella Savage, had passed through the conservatory, into a marble paved arcade, that ran beneath the

windows of the drawing-room, over which passion-flowers, jessamine, honeysuckles, and clematis, had climbed, and mingled their beauties and their sweets.

“What a lovely evening, or rather night!” said Miss Lambart; “for hark, the monitor from the tower proclaims the hour of ten.”

“I am glad we have escaped from the drawing-room,” observed lady Stella; “I detest cards and scandal.”

“And I dearly love moonlight,” said Indiana, raising her blue eyes to the bright orb which threw its placid beams full on the arcade under which they stood. “I remember many moonlight nights, when elevated on a howdah*, on the back of an elephant, I have travelled leagues over plains, mountains, and forests, that would have been truly delightful, but for the continual dread of decoits† intercepting us in the defiles; or ferocious beasts, or poisonous reptiles, springing upon us from the jungles and thickets. Well, thank Heaven, I can now enjoy the moonlight,

* A seat like a chair.

† Robbers.

being in a country where there are neither tigers nor snakes."

"True," replied lady Stella; "thanks be to saint Patrick, there is neither animal nor reptile to render moonlight dangerous, except man."

"And does daylight divest him of his teeth and claws?" asked Miss Lambart, smiling.

"Certainly not," replied lady Stella; "but in the broad eye of day, his intended victims are more upon their guard, and prudence suggests many expedients for parrying and shunning his attacks; but we betide her who meets him when silence is in the grove, and the moon in the sky.

How soft and dangerous is that mellow light,
When man the aspect of a god doth wear!
Then every fault is hidden from the sight,
And fancy paints his very vices fair.

Such interviews," continued lady Stella, "discretion should teach every female to avoid; for *'silver sweet sound lover's tongues by night, like softest music to attending ears.'*"

"I will take care never to be alone

with a lover by moonlight," said Indiana: "but hush, some one approaches;" after listening a moment, she stepped out upon the greensward—"I am certain," resumed she, "we have some listener near us;" but looking around, far as the moon threw its beams, she beheld only groups of flowering shrubs, interspersed with tall evergreens. "I was mistaken," said she; "I can see no living creature; the sound I heard must have been the wind rustling among the trees."

"I love the silver queen of night," said Miss Lambart, "for I think her light recalls and inspires those holy and devotional feelings, which the necessary avocations, as well as the frivolous pursuits of day, are but too apt to obliterate from the mind. I never watch the course of the moon, or see the stars glittering in their spheres, without adoring the wisdom and power of that Great and Glorious Being, who gave '*the lesser lights to rule the night*,' and praying to be rendered worthy of a place in that heaven, illumined by his presence. When I was a mere child,

the baroness Wandesford, my ever-revered and beloved aunt, taught me some lines, which are still fresh in my memory, and as they are applicable to the present subject, I will endeavour to repeat them.

Twilight's dim hour is brighten'd by the beams,
Shed from the moon now rising o'er yon steep.
The dark brow'd cliff with sudden beauty gleams,
And silver floats upon the rippling deep.

Even now pale evening's dusky shadows throw,
O'er nature's charms a shroud of mist and gloom.
Till yon bright orb transform'd to gems the dew,
That trembling hung on ev'ry tree and bloom.

Fair is the earth, but fairer far the sky,
Where shines the moon and all her splendid train,
Yet beyond these my aspirations fly,
And my soul hopes a brighter heaven to gain.

" Beautiful !" said lady Stella.

" Beautiful !" repeated another voice.
but it was not lady Indiana that spoke.

The fair friends looked at each other in astonishment.—" You that echo my words, come forth," said lady Stella ;
" make yourself visible ;" as she spoke, she looked out on the green, but she saw only the shrubs gently waving their branches in the clear moonlight.

" Is the place haunted ?" asked Indiana.

“Only by mortal spirits like ourselves, I believe,” replied Miss Lambart.

“You say truly, I am indeed mortal,” replied a voice, clear, distinct, and manly ; “I linger here, fair enthusiast, only to say that at no very distant period you will confess—

“Bright as seems the moonlight hour,
Sweet as smells the woodbine bower,
These will dark and scentless prove,
If they want the charm of love

“Silver’d by the clear moon’s beam,
Doth each shrub and floweret seem,
Quivering as the night-winds move,
Like the trembling breath of love.

“Yet though bright the moon, stars be,
Soft the mystic night-winds blow,
Still from these will fancy rove,
Sighing oft for absent love.

“Starless nights, in rocky dells,
Caverns drear, where famine dwells,
These shall bright and happy prove,
Cheer’d with smiles of faithful love.

“If love’s spirit absent be,
What are moon or stars to thee ?
Fair one, bright they ne’er can prove,
Wanting light that beams from love.”

The speaker was silent ; the ladies still listened with almost breathless attention, when a low sound at the end of the ar-

cade made them turn their eyes towards the conservatory door, which being open, the light from a distant lamp fell on the tall figure of a man, as he hastily entered. —“ Now, who in the name of wonder can that be ?” said lady Stella—“ no stranger, I should think, by his choosing to pass through the conservatory ; it was the height of Mr. Oxmantown ; but he would never expose his charming person, or hazard his delicate health, by remaining such a length of time in the open night-air : nor has he taste to admire poetry, or intellect enough to commit to memory, or recite.”

“ It was not at all like Mr. Oxmantown’s voice,” observed Indiana ; “ for you know he has a most disagreeable squeak, when he attempts to read, or speak aloud. General Forbes is a tall man—perhaps it was him.”

“ No,” rejoined lady Stella ; “ I acquit the general of any, even the slightest acquaintance with the Muses ; he may have some intimacy with Mars, but is an absolute stranger to Apollo. No, it was not general Forbes.”

“ I thought the figure like colonel Lis-
more’s,” said Miss Lambart.

“ Taller, I am certain,” replied Indiana ;
“ and the voice was not at all like the co-
lonel’s.”

“ Nor that of any person of whom I
have the least recollection,” said lady Stella ;
“ it was, to say the truth, a manly, flexi-
ble, agreeable voice, and one that I should
recognise again after twenty years had pass-
ed away, if I heard it among a thousand.”

“ The verses were very pretty,” remark-
ed Indiana.

“ And were delivered *with good accent
and good discretion*,” resumed lady Stella.
“ But, come, while we are wondering who
has been listening to our admiration of
madame Luna, we forget that, in all pro-
bability, we may find the eaves-dropper in
the drawing-room ;” but in this expectation
they were disappointed, for the gentlemen
had not yet left their wine, and they found
only the ladies, some earnestly engaged at
cards, the rest listening to the countess of
Drogheda’s “ *hair-breadth’ scapes*,” by flood
and field, and envying her the profusion
of gems that fortune had, they thought,

misplaced in her possession; but dearer than her *bijouterie* she loved her daughter, and her ladyship was beginning to get uneasy at her absence, when she saw her advancing towards the sofa, on which she sat.—“Sure then, and I thought you were lost, Indy; where have you been, child?”

Lady Indiana related the adventure of the arcade, and lady Stella inquired if any gentleman had arrived who had not made his appearance at dinner? .

Lady Mazarina Maenamara took upon herself to be quite certain, that if there had been an addition to the party now staying at the castle, the countess Vandeleur, with her usual *bienveillance*, would have announced the arrival.

Miss O'Brien sneeringly observed — “Millefleur, my maid, says, that lord Cloghnickelty’s man is quite a genius; that he makes acrostics, charades, and rebusses; he is a tall man—no doubt he is the person whose reciting is so admirable.”

“It is possible,” replied Miss Lambart, “though I think it rather improbable, that he would so far forget his situation, as to take the liberty of listening to our

conversation, or obtruding his own ideas”

“ I am convinced it was not lord Cloghnickelty’s man,” said lady Stella.

“ For my part,” resumed Miss O’Brien, “ I neither know nor care; yet, really, with submission, I do not see how you can be certain, unless you have heard Cloghnickelty’s man recite, and know his voice.”

“ No, I never heard him speak that I remember,” said lady Stella; “ but for all that, I am certain it was not him.”

“ I am certain,” replied Miss O’Brien, affectedly, “ it is no concern of mine.”

“ Whoever the person was,” continued lady Stella, “ he gave proof of taste and education; and if the lines he recited were his own, they evinced talent that places him many degrees above a composer of acrostics, charades, and rebusses.”

With a look of weariness, Miss O’Brien placed her white hand on her forehead, and protested her head ached excessively. Lady Stella smiled, and turning to Miss Lambart, asked her if she was disposed for music?

Miss Lambart expressed an assent, and they repaired to the music-room, leaving Miss O'Brien extremely provoked to think that, having complained of the headach, she must leave to Miss Lambart undivided attention and admiration.

The honourable Mrs. Chatterton having just won a pool at quadrille, had resigned her place to Miss Forbes, and now wished her niece to make one at a round game; but Miss O'Brien declared herself very unwell, and under the necessity of retiring to her chamber.

Mrs. Chatterton's eyes followed her as she left the room, and shrugging her shoulders, said—"I wish it was over, for I plainly perceive we are on the eve of *unc grande de couverte*."

The next morning lady Indiana Corry wrote, as she had promised, a note to lord Cloghnickelty, which she desired her maid to give to his valet, with a request that it might be delivered as soon as his lordship was up. Having a medicine to administer, the man drew back his lordship's curtain, who, with his jaws distended, was snoring loud enough to "*murder sleep*," and pre-

senting as ugly a specimen of humanity as ever was exhibited. After some time spent in yawning, coughing, and wheezing, the man presented the draught. Lord Cloghnickelty having smelt, and made sundry wry faces at it, swallowed it down, swearing it was the most bitter nauseous stuff that he had ever poured down his throat, and if doctor Gore could not write a more palatable prescription, something fit for a gentleman to take, he would dispense with his attendance—"For, confound the fellow, he believed he wanted to poison him." When a little recovered, his man gave him lady Indiana's billet.

"What the devil can the girl have to say to me?" exclaimed Cloghnickelty, turning the note about; "I cannot read without my glasses; no secret, though, I dare say. Here, Ryan, open it and read it."

"All about love, I dare say," observed the maker of acrostics; "a most beautiful seal, a dove with a letter in its beak, and the motto '*J'ai pens a vous*.'"

"Curse the motto," exclaimed lord Cloghnickelty, impatiently; "I want to know the contents."

“ ‘I beg to inform your lordship, I do not like Mr. Oxmantown’s person or manners.’ ”

“ Confound the milksop and his weak nerves—I do not wonder she does not like him,” said lord Cloghnickelty; “ but go on, Ryan.”

“ ‘And I beg to be understood seriously, that no power on earth shall ever compel me to become his wife.’ ”

“ Here is a disappointment ! my scheme blown to the devil ! Here is a little perverse undutiful vixen ! but I will not put myself in a passion, for if I do, I shall bring on a fit of the gout or asthma. Proceed, Ryan,” said his lordship, panting with suppressed rage.

“ ‘And I call upon your lordship, by the devotion you profess for my sex, to release me from farther solicitation and persecution on the account of Mr. Oxmantown, who, to do him justice, seems to regard me with quite as little partiality as I do him.’ ”

“ Pique, by saint Patrick ! nothing else but pique,” wheezed Cloghnickelty. “ Confound the stupid puppy, there is as much

warmth in an iceberg as there is in him ; his behaviour has been enough to freeze the girl, sure enough ; so cold and so distant—no putting life into his heavy carcase—no wonder she is offended—but go on, Ryan, let me hear the rest.”

“ ‘ I rely upon your lordship’s generosity, to inform the earl of Drogheda that my rejection of Mr. Oxmantown proceeds not only from a certainty that we are not at all suited to each other, but from my prepossession in favour of another—a person who has had more knowledge of the world, and whose experience in life renders him a fitter guide and protector for the inexperienced Indiana Corry.’ ”

“ And has the impertinent little baggage the insufferable insolence to imagine, that after this most disrespectful rejection of my nephew, the honourable Mr. Oxmantown, a lineal descendant from the great Brien Boru, that I shall interfere for her, the offspring of fag-ends and ravelled skeins of cotton, the produce of a dunghill? Zounds! I have not patience with the little presuming—” His lordship, seeing Ryan smile, shook his cork leg at him, and swore

“he had a great mind to throw it at his head, for daring to grin at his perplexities and disappointments.”

Ryan protested he had “no intention to offend, but must take the liberty to say. he thought his lordship’s zeal for Mr. Oxmantown made him misunderstand the latter part of the young lady’s billet, which, in his humble opinion, particularly concerned himself.”

“Hey! what? Concern me!—How?—in what way?” asked Cloghnickelty; “what do you mean? Put down the *confounded scrawl*, you scoundrel—what are you pondering over it for?”

“I beg your pardon, my lord, but the young lady says, she rejects Mr. Oxmantown,” said Ryan, “because she prefers a person who has more knowledge and experience.”

“Well, and what then?—why the devil do you repeat the offensive stuff?”

“I do not think,” continued Ryan, “her ladyship designed to offend, for I certainly believe it is your lordship she prefers.”

“No! surely you do not think so, do

you?" returned Cloghnickelty, smirking, and looking in the glass that stood before him.—"To be sure there have been women—but no, Ryan, confound it, no—a young girl like her would never take a fancy to me."

"Depend upon it, my lord, it is so," said Ryan; "only let me read her billet to you again."

Cloghnickelty's grey eyes twinkled as he listened, and when Ryan concluded, he observed—"There had been instances of young women preferring husbands older than themselves, and if lady Indiana Corry prefers ~~Ryan~~ it will be cruel to dis-

lords~~hip~~ was always too fond of the ladies," said Ryan, "to treat them with cruelty."

Cloghnickelty was seized with a violent fit of coughing, as he replied—"To be sure, I have had a name for gallantry, but a man should have more honour than to boast of the favours he has received from the fair sex. Confound it, Ryan, if I marry lady Indiana Corry, what am I to do with Mrs. Macfane?"

“Marry her to somebody else, my lord,” returned Ryan.

“She expects to be lady Cloghnicketty : and the children, Ryan, what the devil must I do with them ?” asked his lordship.

“You must give them fortunes, and marry them off your hands,” replied Ryan.

“I shall have a great deal of trouble to get rid of Macfane,” resumed his lordship ; “but it must be done ; she must quit the house before I bring home a young wife.”

“To be sure, my lord, for it would not be right to provoke jealousy,” said Ryan ; “and some ill-disposed person might whisper the intimacy that had subsisted between your lordship and your house-keeper.”

“I must get a husband for Macfane,” said his lordship, “and provide for her children, which I shall be very well able to do, for Drogheda has told me the fortune he will give his daughter. Hand me the little charmer’s note, Ryan ; how confoundedly Oxmantown will stare when he finds I am his rival !”

Mr. Ryan laughed in his sleeve as he assisted lord Cloghnicketty down stairs ;

and having seen him to the breakfast-parlour, hastened to the housekeeper's-room, to repeat the hoax he had put upon old Nick, to laugh at his credulity, and entertain the ladies and gentlemen, his associates, with imitating his peculiarities and infirmities.

The earl of Drogheda and Mr. Oxmantown were at breakfast, *tête-à-tête*, when Cloghnickelty, affecting the gaiety of youth, and endeavouring to walk firm, surprised them by his presence. Drogheda cordially shook his friend by the hand; Mr. Oxmantown having whispered out the compliments of the morning, expressed his astonishment at seeing him up so early.—“A circumstance of such rare occurrence,” said the honourable gentleman, “would really be alarming, if the cheerfulness of your looks did not remove all apprehension that your sleep had been disturbed by pain or——”

“There, there—your speech has been quite long enough,” interrupted Cloghnickelty; “you forget the weakness of your nerves, and the injury you may do them, by keeping your mouth open too

long at a time; this is one of the longest speeches I ever heard you make in my life."

"You are quite facetious this morning," squeaked Mr. Oxmantown. "Shall I help you, uncle, to some ham?"

Cloghnickelty declined the ham, and helped himself to an egg.

"Early rising," observed Drogheda, "creates an appetite sure, for I am as hungry as a hound this morning; and I hope you will be after making a hearty breakfast, or else you have been disturbed to little purpose, my good friend."

"My sleep was disturbed, I confess," said Cloghnickelty.

"I thought so," rejoined Mr. Oxmantown; "I am extremely sorry—vastly concerned indeed."

"There is not the least occasion for sorrow or concern on my account," returned Cloghnickelty, "but on the contrary, for congratulation; it was not pain, grief, or disappointment, that disturbed me, Mr. Oxmantown; it was pleasure, most unexpected and delectable to my feelings. What man would wish to sleep," con-

tinued he, placing his shrivelled hand on his breast, and endeavouring to suppress the troublesome wheezing of his breath, "when such exquisite transport greets his waking."

The honourable Mr. Oxmantown let fall the ham he was conveying to his mouth, and opening his leaden orbs wider than usual, whispered his wish to be informed to what exquisite transport his lordship alluded to.

"Faith sure, and I am not a little curious to be let into the secret too," said Drogheda.

"My most worthy friend," resumed Cloghnickelty, "whom I hope soon to call by a dearer name, it is neither my interest nor my intention to have any concealments with you. No, Drogheda, I am a man of honour, and despise all clandestine proceedings: let this," said he, drawing the note of Indiana from his bosom, and pressing it to his lips, "let this dear little billet explain to you my transports and my wishes."

Drogheda, looking at the superscription, laughed, and said—"Indy has been as

good as her promise, I see ; she has sent you a chit this morning."

" If she was to send me a thousand such chits," replied Cloghnickelty, " I would receive them with transport."

Mr. Oxmantown believed himself the subject of lady Indiana's billet, and attributed his uncle's transport to her no longer rejecting the proposed alliance. Mr. Oxmantown was more in love with Miss Lambart than he was with any one except himself, and saw nothing desirable in a marriage with lady Indiana Corry but her large fortune.

The earl of Drogheda's countenance grew serious as he read, and his fine open brow contracted, till he very nearly frowned ; when throwing the note on the table, he exclaimed—" Sure now and I have but one child, and she will be after turning out a plague, and a torment, and a——"

" Hold, my dear friend," interrupted Cloghnickelty ; " I cannot suffer you, in my hearing, to speak of the charming little angel in that angry tone."

" Sure and is not it enough to make a saint angry ?" returned Drogheda ; " does

she not positively refuse to marry Mr. Oxmantown, after we had entered into engagements?"

"She is not to be blamed on that account," rejoined Cloghnickelty; "for though the puppy is my nephew, I must say there is nothing about him to attract or engage the affection of a young lady; he has no life, no soul, to admire any thing but himself."

"I am very sorry," said Drogheda, "for the disappointment this undutiful girl of mine occasions you, Mr. Oxmantown; you had my good wishes; I did all I could to bring about a match between you; sure now and so did lady Drogheda; but the girl would not be persuaded at all: faith, it vexes me to say there is an end of the affair, but what can I do?"

"Nothing at all, my worthy friend," replied Cloghnickelty, "nothing is asked of you, but acquiescence with the young lady's desire; I do not expect or wish you to be such a tyrant, as to force your daughter to marry my nephew, whether she will or no; nor am I such a barbarian

as to desire her to spend her days with a man she dislikes."

"By saint Patrick, you speak like a man of sense and humanity," said Drogheda; "and sure now I hope the girl's obstinacy will not be the breaking off our friendship."

"Not at all," returned Cloghnickelty, shaking the earl's offered hand. "I hope, and am persuaded, we shall be more friendly than ever. See how that block-head," pointing to Oxmantown, "sits admiring his nails, and looking as stupid as an overfed calf; no wonder the girl refuses you, for, curse confound you, it would have been as good taste to have fallen in love with a clumsy polar bear as with you."

"I am infinitely obliged by your good opinion," replied Mr. Oxmantown, roused by these reproaches into speaking a note higher than his general custom.

"Faith now," rejoined Drogheda, "but this same small bit of a note is likely to make a great big piece of mischief; but, on the honour of a soldier, I assure you, Mr. Oxmantown, I am heartily concerned at this."

“Not on my account, I hope,” interrupted Oxmantown; “I am not at all offended that lady Indiana Corry did not find me to her taste; and for my part,” surveying himself in the chimney-glass, and speaking conceitedly, “I beg to assure you, I shall not fall into despair, or die of disappointment.”

“I hope not,” resumed Drogheda, “for I wish you to live and be happy; but sure now, and that is more than I can be after promising for myself at all; for not contented with vexing me by refusing you, this undutiful girl says she likes somebody else.”

“Colonel Lismore,” said Oxmantown; “he is the young lady’s choice: I observed she seemed pleased with his attentions.”

“You are out in your observations there, Mr. Wiseacre,” rejoined Cloghniekelty; “lady Indiana Corry, I will venture to pronounce, cares no more for colonel Lismore than she does for you. I have good reason for believing he is not the man.”

“I am not sufficiently interested in the matter to lay a wager upon it,” said Ox-

mantown; "or I should not be afraid to hazard a good round sum that he is the very man."

"You would lose your wager as sure as you have lost the lady," returned Cloghnickelty. "Lismore—pshaw! what knowledge of life has he—what experience in the ways of the world?"

"Faith, sure, and he has seen some service," rejoined Drogheda; "and has the name of being a brave man and a good officer."

"And no man knows more of fashionable life than colonel Lismore," said Oxmantown; "and having been in the army ever since he was a boy, he must have experience in the ways of the world."

"I tell you, puppy," exclaimed Cloghnickelty, "he is not the person; lady Indiana has fixed her choice upon a man of riper years and more wisdom. Drogheda, read the little angel's note again, and you will see she says she has fixed her affection upon a man capable of guiding her inexperience; and is it likely she means a gay philiandering rake, such as Lismore? No, no; the angelic creature has more discretion."

it a queer sort of a notion, for a young thing like her to fix upon you for a husband."

"Quite impossible," observed Mr. Oxmantown; "such a preposterous idea could never enter into a young lady's head."

"I am afraid there is some mistake," said Drogheda.

"Certainly there must," rejoined Mr. Oxmantown.

"Hold your tongue, puppy" said Cloghnickelty, "before I crack that empty scull of yours. Drogheda, perhaps you wish there may be a mistake. You are not desirous," continued he, "of my alliance?"

"I am desirous that my only child should be happy," replied the earl; "but I think, as Mr. Oxmantown observes, there must be a mistake. I do not wish to offend you, Cloghnickelty, but faith now
——"

"Zounds and the devil!" interrupted Cloghnickelty, who, having once adopted an opinion, obstinately persisted in asserting it, "there is no mistake, there can be

none! the thing is as plain as the nose on your face. Will you take the trouble to question the young lady?"

"Och, to be sure I will, and that immediately; for, faith now, I am as anxious to understand her meaning as you can be," said the earl, rising to ring the bell; but before he could lay his hand upon it, the door opened, and the countess of Drogheda, followed by her daughter and lady Stella Savage, entered.

"Faith, and you are arrived just in the nick of time," said the earl. "Come here, Indy, my darling, and speak for yourself, for this chit of yours," holding up the note, "has quite puzzled——"

"Not at all, as far as concerns me," squeaked Mr. Oxmantown; "I beg leave to say, I perfectly understand that the young lady rejects my suit."

"And I beg leave to say, that I am greatly honoured in being acquainted with lady Indiana's sentiments," said Cloghnickelty; "and I faithfully promise to make it the business of my life——"

"Sure and what is it you are after mean-

ing, all of you?" asked lady Drogheda; "I do not understand you at all at all."

"Indy," resumed Drogheda, fondly drawing his daughter toward him, "I expect you to explain this comical business; you need not be blushing so, my jewel; only be after speaking your mind plain and easy, and just tell us—are you serious in refusing to marry Mr. Oxmantown?"

"Quite serious," replied Indiana; "and I am certain, if Mr. Oxmantown will be candid, he will acknowledge that he has no more inclination for the match than myself."

The honourable Mr. Oxmantown did not think it polite to contradict a lady, so he turned to the window, and to prove his *nonchalance*, amused himself with throwing out pieces of bread to a peacock, that was displaying its gorgeous plumage to the sun.

Lady Drogheda perceiving the employment of Mr. Oxmantown, drew up her long yellow neck, with an air of offended pride, and protested that she was not sorry Indy had refused him, for the ease with

which he gave her up was a plain proof he had no love at all for her.

“ He has no love for any mortal except himself,” said Cloghnickelty ; “ I am sorry to say, on account of our near relationship, that the honourable Mr. Oxmantown is a most incorrigible puppy—a frozen-hearted fellow, that beauty can never melt or warm ; but in me, lady Indiana, you behold your admiring, adoring slave, a man sensible of your charms ; though I should never have presumed to flatter myself with your approbation, had you not generously encouraged me to declare——” Here a fit of coughing seized him, and it was some time before he could recover breath sufficient to say—“ Yes, charming creature ! I solemnly swear, in the presence of your parents, all my knowledge of the world, all my experience in life, shall be devoted to your service ; I shall be most happy to become the protector of your youth, and I here offer you my hand and heart.”

“ You !” exclaimed lady Drogheda ; “ faith, sure you are crazy ! you, that have only one leg to stand upon, talk of being .

Indy's protector! you, that have not breath enough to puff out a rushlight, want to marry a girl of sixteen!"

Ladies Stella and Indiana laughed; Cloghnickelty looked disconcerted; and Drogheda astonished and perplexed.

Mr. Oxmantown, turning from the window, said, with a suppressed laugh—"What, crest-fallen, uncle? Will you take a bet now on the gentleman I mentioned?"

"Hold your impertinent tongue, puppy!" replied the irritated Cloghnickelty, "or," shaking his crutch at him, "I shall take the liberty to break your head."

Perceiving that his wife's coarse allusion to his infirmities had offended his old friend, Drogheda, in a grave tone, desired his daughter to cease laughing.—"Indiana," said he, "I insist upon a serious answer—are you in love with lord Cloghnickelty?"

"Faith, now, I never heard you ask such a foolish question before," observed lady Drogheda, "when sure and sure, you must be certain the thing is quite and clean impossible!"

“Faith, honey, I all along thought it could never be ; but sure, for all that, she ought to speak plain,” said the earl. “Come now, Indy, jewel, be a good girl, and put an end to this perplexing business.”

Composing her features, lady Indiana replied—“It never was my intention to mislead any one ; I always declared I could not accept Mr. Oxmantown’s addresses, from the time he was proposed to me.”

“Faith, now, and that is truth every word of it,” said Drogheda. “And when I wrote to lord Cloghnickelty, it never entered my imagination that he would suppose I rejected his nephew to accept himself.”

“So then you wrote me a fudge story, of being prepossessed in favour of a person of knowledge and experience, just to delude me into making a fool of myself,” said Cloghnickelty ; “but you are like the rest of your sex, I perceive, deceitful and mischievous.”

“That is not the genteel thing of you sure,” rejoined lady Drogheda, “to abuse

the poor females, because you have been after making yourself ridiculous."

At that moment the honourable colonel Lismore coming up to the window, asked the ladies if they were ready for their morning's ride.

"The sooner we depart the better," said lady Stella, "and leave the gentlemen to compose their ruffled spirits by reflection."

Lady Drogheda took her daughter by the arm, and followed lady Stella from the apartment.

Mr. Oxmantown, having seen colonel Lismore lift lady Indiana into his curriele, and the smiling attention with which she appeared to listen to him, protested it required no sort of reflection to discover where the young lady's preference was bestowed.

"Confound your squeaking voice and your weak nerves, you great overgrown calf," replied Cloghnickelty; "I am not at all surprised she did not prefer you. Drogheda, give me your hand—let us continue friends."

"With all the soul of me!" replied the

earl, shaking his offered hand ; “ though we cannot be relations, that is no reason at all why we should not be friends.”

END OF VOL. I.

